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The Trio

From a painting by E. B. B. A. on the possession of J. D. G. Esq. Etched by Salway.

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EDITED BY
WILFRID MEYNELL.
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VOL. I.

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LONDON.

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THE

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SIR FREDERICK LEIGHTON, BART., P.R.A.

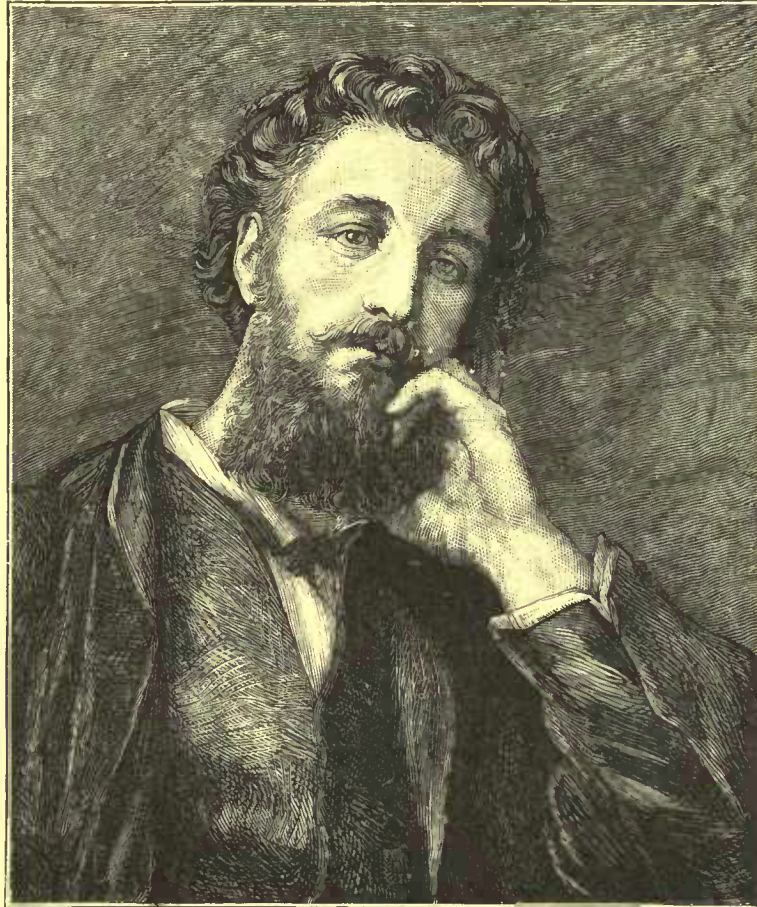


FROM THE FRIEZE IN THE DIVAN OF
SIR F. LEIGHTON'S HOUSE.

“Y dear sir, you have no choice. Nature has done it for you. Your son may be as eminent as he pleases.” The words were spoken by Hiram Powers, and they were the final answer of artistic authority to a father anxious as to the future of a son. Happily, in the case of the young Frederick Leighton, the opinion given so decisively was as frankly accepted, although it can hardly be supposed that even Hiram Powers, judging from the sketches shown to him in Florence in 1845, foresaw in the boy the future author of the “Ariadne,” of “Dante in Exile,” of the “Athlete,” and the artist found worthiest to occupy the chair of Sir Joshua Reynolds in an Academy which included a Watts and a Millais among its members.

The visit to the American sculptor was not a whim or an impulse; for the young artist had already been at work for several years. A member of the family possesses to this day a wonderful dog drawn by the child at six; and, when he was ten years old, recovery from a long and severe illness persuaded him that he had been saved to become a great painter. At the age of eleven he was studying in Rome under Francesco Meli; then came a spell at the Berlin Academy; then that momentous visit to Florence, which decided his career; and, immediately afterwards, a study at the Academy of the city of Michael Angelo, of Dante, of Savonarola. Still keeping the love of Florence in his heart, the boy at sixteen went to Frankfort-on-the-Maine; and he chose at Brussels, in 1848, for the subject of his first picture, Cimabue finding Giotto drawing while he kept his sheep. After a winter at Brussels, he added a French course to his Italian, German, and Belgian studies, by working

in the Louvre life-school, copying in the galleries at the same time. Returning to Frankfort, he studied, until 1853, under Professor Steinle, who preached to his pupil the avoidance of mannerism, and developed his natural horror of vulgarity, as



John Ruskin
1850

(From a Portrait by G. F. Watts, R.A.)

well as his love of a fine distinction. At last, at about the age of one-and-twenty, the patient student was found ripe for painting in Rome. There he worked for some three years, and there, at the age of twenty-four, he produced the picture

which established him suddenly but surely in England as a famous man. This was the "Procession of Cimabue's Madonna," Mr. Leighton's first Academy picture. The name of the young Continental student was not known here, and his work was an almost unparalleled surprise. The exquisite serenity of the treatment at a time in which art was tawdry when it was decorative; the chaste and cool colour at a period when garish hues prevailed; the lofty sense of beauty in a day of prettiness; in a word, the inspiration of mediæval Florence shining upon Trafalgar Square—the thing was altogether unexpected, as new in its style as in its merits. In spite of the admiration excited, and of the fact that the picture of the year was bought by the Queen, the young painter fled from the scene of his brilliant *début*, and, during a residence of some years in Paris, gained from study and practice an increase in technical skill, and from Ary Scheffer an addition of sentiment.

From 1858 onwards there has not been a single exhibition at the Royal Academy unenriched by the prolific brush of its Associate in 1864, its Member in 1869, its President since 1878. Glancing along the list of all these pictures, we naturally divide them into the emotional and the decorative; if there is always power in the latter and beauty in the former, the two classes are none the less distinct. Perhaps, in the mind of the casual stroller through the galleries, the name of Sir Frederick Leighton is chiefly associated with the loveliest work employed on the lightest and slightest of objects, in which Learning wears her gayest and most graceful aspects. The famous "Odalisque"—the picture of a languid Eastern lady surrounded by white-and-gold and peacock-blue—by which the young artist may be considered to have begun his more distinctive culture of the beautiful, has been followed by a long succession of female studies, Eastern, Italian, and Oriental, in which extreme refinement of colour, elegance of form, and all the smoothness of a singularly complete method of execution have combined to produce a beauty more than human. The "Venus," the exquisite group of "Helen on the Ramparts of Troy," the "Pastoral," the "Music Lesson," are only a few of a series which enchants, and which represents what might be, rather than what is; for, since the Greeks by their religious culture of beauty, by their "natural selection," their exercises, and their unguents, developed forms as perfect and skins as lucid as these, the modern world—distracted by cares and abstracted by religion—has produced no bodies so ideal in delicacy and grace. This mood of the painter—the one, as we have said, in which he is most easily recognised by the out-of-studio world—has found its fullest expression in such works as the "Venus"—a serious and memorable study of the nude; the "Helen"—Homeric in its dignity; "Golden Hours"—a dream of perfect felicity; and the "Daphnephoria"—a work of gay yet heroic movement. Among the productions of this same mood, though executed in another medium, may be most correctly classed the cartoons at the South Kensington Museum, one of which, "The Arts of Peace," is the subject of an engraving.

But however much the loveliness of the President's youths and maidens pleases us, we admire still more the strength and manliness he has discovered to us in

another, and his noblest, mood. The grand picture of David looking over Jerusalem by evening, and exclaiming for the wings of one of those doves whose flight he watches against the darkening sky; the "St. Jerome," kneeling in the desert, with his intense face; the tremendous "Clytemnestra," watching from the walls of Argos the fires which announce the return of the doomed Agamemnon; the "Dante in Exile;" and the "Elijah and the Angel"—which we engrave—these and many other of the President's more serious compositions will be recalled when we consider this phase of his faculty. Nor must we overlook another and a different mood of strength—of strength, yet still of elegance—the mood which produced the group of sculpture, "Athlete Strangling a Python," exhibited in the Academy of 1877, and purchased by the Chantrey Fund; also the "Sluggard" of a few years later, with its beautiful forms relaxed and in tension. Powerful in feeling and form, learned in anatomy, both where that anatomy is expressed and where it is implied, and original in design, these noble works seem to embody something of the Greek instinct, and can bear to be brought into comparison with even the masterpieces of antiquity.

There is hardly one among Sir Frederick Leighton's compositions which does not convince us that it is seriously thought out. Explained by the painter himself, the pictures are full of earnest intention, artistic and human. We are made aware of the liberal enlargement of the mind by which a painter of remote men and manners must make himself a part of all that he would show us. It is not enough to paint the past by a kind of retrospective study; there must also be a looking at the world in the manner of the past, ignoring the things that followed, and knowing familiarly the things that were. Sir Frederick Leighton, in painting his "Phryne," for instance, intended to render the subject with nothing of the somewhat trivial feeling with which the undraped figure is often treated in modern art. He presented Phryne as a Greek would see her—a Greek of a world to which the great ascetic religions, and the rebellions against them, were equally unknown. To this Greek the beautiful woman was a revelation of the high gods, and the contemplation of her beauty a reverential act. Sir Frederick Leighton painted the figure, therefore, with insistence upon its merely sensuous loveliness, and yet with gravity of feeling. Something of the same intention inspired the "Cymon and Iphigenia," which followed a year or two later. In this beautiful composition, however, the painter presents the idea with mediæval modifications. Here the woman is not a Phryne, but a high-born and innocent lady, and the man's admiration is not a sufficient and complete act in itself; it leads him to educate himself and mend his manners. Here we have the conception of a Boccaccio—a mind aware of the Christian faith and ethics. This last-named picture is one of the most important of its painter's recent works. It is "thought out" in every passage. The scene is Cyprus—an island of fancies to the Italian, a vague place on the way to the fabulous East, where ladies may make their couch under the trees at night. Iphigenia lies under the glimpses of the rising moon, and the summer night is full of the late daylight. The



THE STUDIO OF SIR FREDERICK LEIGHTON, P.R.A.

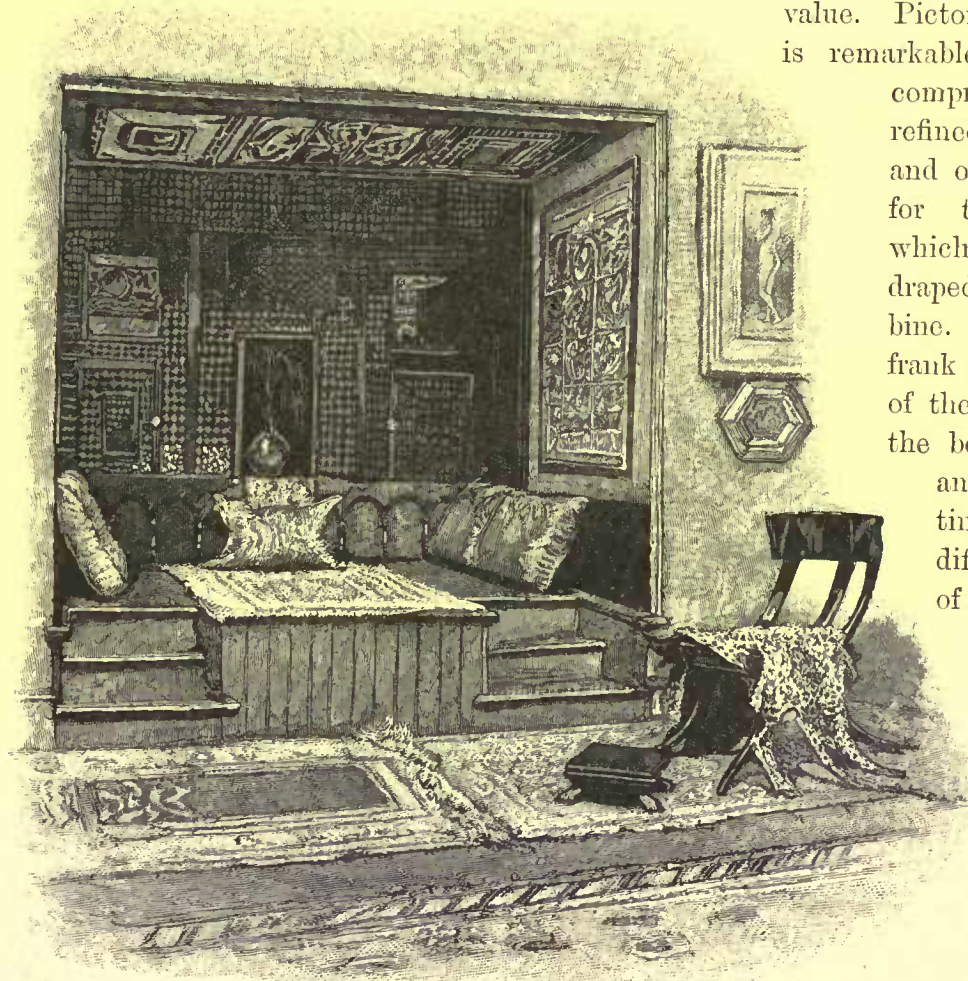
spectator faces the east, and the western light falls on the figures and the delicate colours of their draperies. The rustic Cymon, crossing the fields after his day's labour, pauses to receive his first deep mental expression. In his dark face is a kind of tender reflection of the beauty before him. Sir Frederick Leighton has given him a gentle physique and a natural dignity, so that no thought of coarseness should be associated with the character, but that we might rather understand a nature uncultured, indeed, but ready for the purest and most graceful influences.

There is yet another step forward in ethical feeling in the "Wedded." Here the painter has presented perfect human happiness under sanction and benediction. The group of husband and wife are twined together in a caress which is sacred rather than secret. To give the impression of seclusion without concealment the painter has placed them under the open sky, with shore and sea in the prospect at their feet, but surrounded by their castle walls. It is this "thinking out"—escaping careless observers, perhaps—which gives to all Sir Frederick's more serious

pictures a true intellectual value. Pictorially, "Wedded" is remarkable for its colour,

comprising strong but refined tones of purple and orange, as well as for the manner in which the two heavily-draped figures combine. The charmingly frank and tender action of the hands expresses the bond of marriage; and the whole sentiment is delicately different from that of another group of

two — that in the picture called "Whispers." These are but lovers, and their somewhat furtive tenderness may be suggested



ALCOVE IN SMALLER STUDIO, SIR F. LEIGHTON'S HOUSE.

in the title. Yet another phase of affectionateness is presented in the "Sister's Kiss," also a group of two. A charming child, with her hair gathered up in the way which it is to be wished English-women practised on their little ones, stands on a wall and clasps the neck of a girl. The young woman leans on her hands with her back to the wall, and turns her head up for the kiss. The action and expression are altogether those of a sister rather than of a mother. This delight in the many variations of human affection is distinctly characteristic of a painter perhaps generally regarded as devoted to the culture of unemotional beauty.

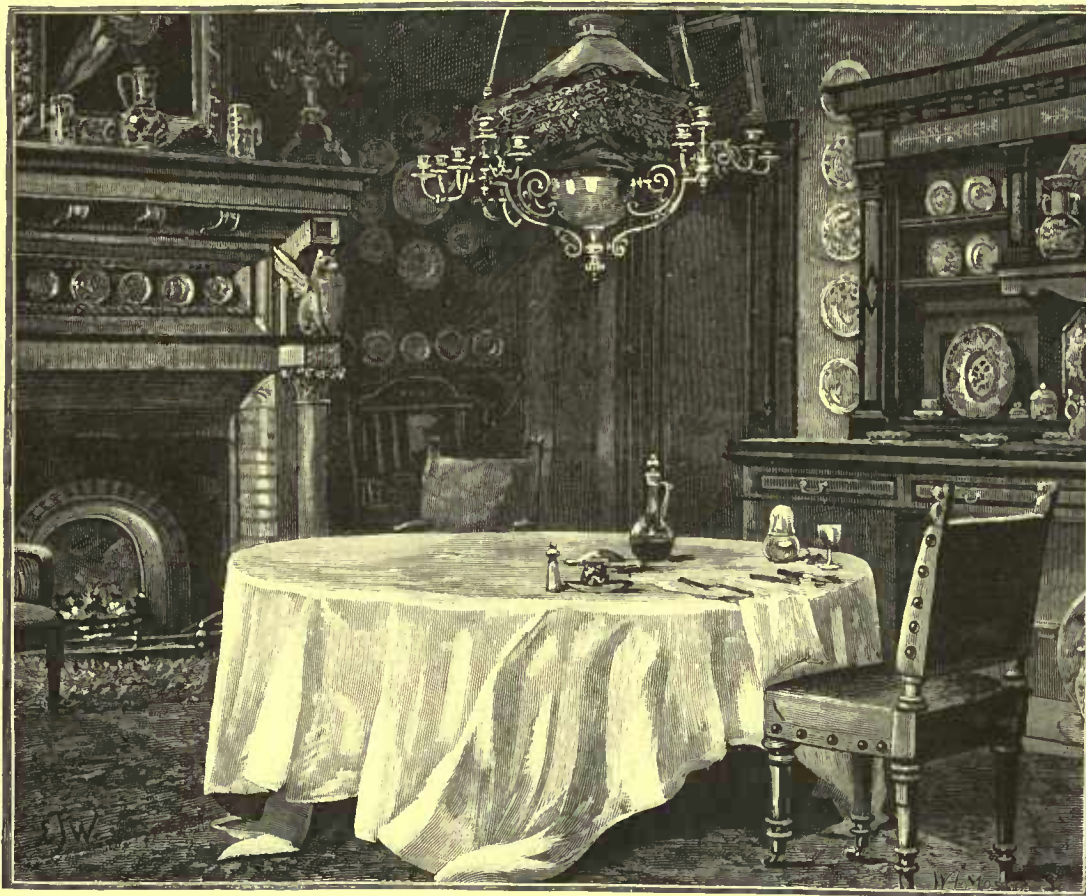


CAPITALS OF COLUMNS AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE DIVAN.

Among the other pictures of action the public should not forget the comparatively small "Elisha and the Son of the Shunamite," one of the painter's infrequent essays in Scriptural illustration. In the figure of the boy the repose and sweetness of innocent death are finely and purely rendered. As to the prophet, the type is studied with care and research, the expression is strong and strenuous, but the action has presented rare difficulties. The painter has evidently found some impossibility in transferring to canvas the curiously beautiful Biblical description of eyes laid upon eyes, hands upon hands. Composition is a stubborn thing, and will not always conform to description. The artist has placed the old man simply crouching, with his gaze intent upon the boy's white face, one hand under the child's head, the other on his breast. Another subject of action, but not of emotion, is the "Eastern Slinger Scaring Birds in the Harvest-time." This singularly beautiful composition shows a cloudless pale sky full of the grey of dusk. A great harvest moon is just rising. Above the tops of a field of wheat is a platform, and on this stands the almost nude figure of an Egyptian, with vigorously upraised arm, slinging a stone. In the distance, another platform rises, with the draped figure of a woman against the moon. She has just cast a stone, and her arms are fallen. The singularly poetic beauty of this scene is conveyed very subtly in the actions, the atmosphere, the rendering of time and climate. It is poetry without an atom of cheap or ready-made sentiment, for nothing is attributed to the figure or the scene except its own inexplicable pathos and dignity of effect.

Of the more purely decorative works, the "Daphnephoria," already alluded

to, is eminently the chief. It is decoration with heroic feeling in it. The lucid blue and white of the largely-treated sky, the grand drawing of the pine-stems, are conceived in perfect harmony with the young and beautiful human beings. The procession is part of the festival which took place once in nine years at Thebes in honour of Apollo. The young people and children of the city are bringing offerings to the god; they come singing to the hill-top, the youths carrying the trophies



A PORTION OF THE DINING-ROOM.

and gifts. In front, next to the leader, goes the laurel-bearer himself, chosen for his beauty, his strength, and his skill; he has the dignity of great stature and serene beauty. Preceding him is carried a stem of olive-wood, decorated with globes of brass as symbols of the sun, moon, and stars; behind him is borne aloft a suit of armour dedicated to the god. Then come the musicians and the elder maidens. The city of Thebes, emptied of its fairest "this pious morn," is seen below. This picture is seventeen feet long. Another piece of largely-conceived decoration is the "Idyll"—simply and purely a picture of beauty. A great landscape of mixed meadow and water, overcast by large cloud-shadows in their passage, spreads out into the distance. On a foreground hill, under the shade of a

low-branched tree, lie two young Greek women, with their noble limbs spread upon draperies of brilliant and subtle blues, purples, and orange-yellows. The two figures of the women are combined in the way dear to Sir Frederick Leighton—a way which exacts all his skill—line composing with line so that there are no breaks or holes or repetitions. “Raphael never had any holes!” exclaims Sir Frederick, revealing in what school he studies those mechanical difficulties of composition which so few even of the great masters have altogether conquered. The two faces are very beautiful in feature and finish, the bodies grandly modelled. To the left, with his back turned, is a piper piping. To the same class, too, belongs “Winding the Skein,” which has a beautiful sky and a distance of Ægean sea and island mountain-outlines. On a terrace are two figures—a woman seated and a little girl standing. The motions of winding the thread bring the arms into graceful action. The young woman has herculean shoulders which look fit for rougher work; her *pose*, with the head on one side and the broad figure bent, is very graceful. The child has all the peculiar charm of Sir Frederick’s tender and simple little girls. For another such subject—and a yet far more beautiful one—our memory goes back several years to the “Cleoboulos Instructing Cleobouline,” in which the sage is grouped with, perhaps, the sweetest little child ever painted.

The child-pictures, however, form a class among Sir Frederick Leighton’s works; and in that pleasant gallery we may name “Study,” in which a little maiden bends her charming figure over a book—a young figure with all the touching expression of the child’s age. Nothing could be further from sentimentality than this kind of human pathos. In the “Light of the Harem” the most beautiful figure is that of a little girl, draped from head to foot in straight draperies, and holding the mirror by which the odalisque binds her tresses; a group repeated, with variations, in the “Arts of Peace.” Then there is the picture which Sir Frederick Leighton contributed to an exhibition of pictures of children by English artists, held a few years ago at the Fine Art Society’s galleries. “Yasmeeneh,” as he called his little maiden, had a singularly pure face, the fair flesh-tints making pale harmonies with light eyelashes and soft straight hair, in the painting of which the artist has outdone himself; so soft are the masses, in a rather full light, that the individual hairs seem to be represented, and yet with little detail. The child has one deep purple flower and a bunch of peacock feathers; her dress is exquisitely simple. In this respect Sir Frederick shows fine taste, for he never presents children clad in mundane attire, unless, indeed, the exigencies of portraiture demand it. Another study of childhood was “Biondina,” a little creature with flaxen hair, and wearing a blue bodice. But there have been few Academies without a Leighton child.

In portrait we have, most conspicuously, the fine profile of Sir Richard Burton, and the autograph portrait which Sir Frederick Leighton contributed to the collection at the Uffizi, Florence. In the first, the rugged subject has inspired a vigorous manner of treatment, in which the usually smooth painter uses *impasto* freely. The head is almost in profile, with the famous traveller’s principal scars in view.

and the eyes lifted with the steady, melancholy expression of a lion or an eagle, or other far-ranging creature. In his own portrait Sir Frederick has presented himself in his red robe; and here, too, there is a free and masculine execution. Another fine portrait is that of Professor Costa, the Italian painter of landscape, with classical line and feeling. Portraits of men from the President's brush are, however, rare; and there will be more remembrances of the presentments of ladies. Among these is the portrait of Lady Brownlow, a gracious figure in white, loaded with draperies and holding an armful of crimson roses. The whole aspect is feminine and stately, and the candour of effect is helped by the character of the sky. Sir Frederick has taken a portrait-painter's liberties with the horizon, which should be almost on a level with Lady Brownlow's eyes, but which retires to her feet in order to leave the figure in a place of dominance. Sir Frederick's predecessor in office, Sir Joshua Reynolds, had no scruples about this device; nevertheless, to an eye accustomed to look for the horizon in the right place, the effect of these arbitrary horizons is that of a world of four dimensions. Another portrait fresh in remembrance is that of Lady Sibyl Primrose, the little daughter of Lord Rosebery; another, that of Mrs. Hichens, a graceful picture in which a modern dress, unmodified and unidealised, is shown to be capable of artistic treatment; and another, the very beautiful portrait of Mrs. Gordon, seated lengthwise—a picture which is a mass of red and a marvel of delicacy. But, besides the portraits, there is a whole gallery of quasi-portraits—dark Italian heads with draperies of dull but rich green, translucent blondes in soft ruddy violet, English girls with large hats crowning their fair hair, young Greeks with dull black tresses and starry eyes—every type invested with the painter's own delicacy and distinction.

Sir Frederick Leighton has executed several works in wall-painting, besides the lunettes at South Kensington. Among these are the two designs, "Music" and "The Dance," in which these arts are presented in their various influences by means of inventively graceful figures. And one of the chief works of the President's career is the mosaic in St. Paul's. This noble and solemn design on the prophecy, "The Sea shall give up her Dead," has a central group of an angel taking his flight with two scarcely reanimated figures drooping in his arms, while on either side the Dead are arising in their cerements.

We have said something of the "thinking-out" which Sir Frederick Leighton gives to his subjects as subjects. The care and preparation bestowed upon the "working-out" are no less thorough. His composition may be said to be built up. It is solid construction, not surface effect. His method is to finish his picture, as far as regards form, in the cartoon. This is a sepia drawing on brown paper, made of the full size of the picture. All the arrangement is made for this cartoon, whence, when it is completed, the design is traced on the canvas. For it the action of each figure is carefully considered and reconsidered, preliminary studies from the model being made in alternative positions. Thus, before the finishing of the cartoon, all the hard work of collocation was to be done and completed. With

regard to the action of the figures, he first forms his intention, then sketches it, and then gets the model to take the *pose* or the movement for a very rapid drawing from the life. If the model is intelligent, this first quick drawing may be decisive and invaluable; sometimes a painter is obliged to give himself the attitude or movement in a mirror. This once secured, there follow the studies from the nude, the separate studies of parts, the studies of drapery, and the final composition. All these are done before the canvas is touched. The drawings from the nude are made in whole and in detail. It frequently happens that a limb or an articulation requires a pause for anatomical consideration; and not drawing only but sculpture is resorted to, so that the draughtsman may be sure that he understands not only the line but the very



THE STAIRCASE, FROM THE ARAB HALL.



GROUP FROM "THE INDUSTRIAL ARTS OF PEACE."

construction of the body. Among the most interesting tokens of work in Sir Frederick Leighton's studio are these careful and beautiful little models in clay. Some of them are clad with real drapery, to aid in the next process. The studies of drapery in mass and detail are, however, made at great length from the model and the lay figure.

The little clay figures, which may be moved about, do good service in the setting of the composition, but after this their use is over. And when the combinations of actions and attitudes are fully decided, the whole composition is fixed in full and elaborate outlines. Where there is a landscape, preliminary studies are made for distance, sky, tree, or foreground. And some of the President's most charming sketches are in landscape—impressions of light, outline, and colour, by which he has made record of his travel in the East.

The studio in which many of these beautiful works have been executed, and from which the world hopes that many more will come, is in Kensington. A small space by Holland Park comprises two roads, Holland Park Road and Melbury Road, and here, in the literary atmosphere of the home of the Foxes, and overshadowed by the elms of their park, have sprung up the red houses of some dozen artists. Sir Frederick Leighton's home dates from a time before the revival of the prevailing taste—from a time when orchards and lanes extended over the country from the High Street to the Boltons, and when larks could be heard in full song over nondescript grassy intervals which are now populous. With Mr. Watts and Mr. Prinsep for his only painter-neighbours, the Mr. Leighton of those days enjoyed a seclusion which Mr. Norman Shaw and Mr. Burges invaded only to adorn, but which the ambitious builder who followed them has unfortunately outraged in a manner that is irreparable.

Sir Frederick Leighton's house is a substantial modern building—a house of generous and easy yet unpretentious size, not intended to cause astonishment by its proportions and style. A long garden, one walk of which is overshadowed by an Italian *pergola*, lies behind; in front a long gate of carved wood opens upon the short flight of steps. The front door gives access to an entrance-hall of dark colour, hung, like almost every other room in the house, with pictures, and this in turn leads to the beautiful central apartment, open to the skylight above, and containing the picture-hung staircase, while the "divan" and its anteroom—to which we shall shortly return—open from it in another direction. Library, dining-room, and drawing-room lead out by doors in different directions; the studios are above. So much indication of the general plan of the house is necessary before we try to make our readers feel in detail the chief beauties of this charming place, its lucidity and its colour, and indicate a few of the more important pictures and studies on its walls.

To stand, then, in the entrance-hall. It is appropriately simple, walls of a *café au lait* colour and a brown *parquet* giving it a quiet harmony of warm tones. Monochrome studies are here. A beautiful, careful drawing of the "Fontana delle

Tartarughe" at Rome (the design of which is attributed to Raphael) has particular value in Sir Frederick Leighton's eyes, insomuch as it is the work of his old master, Steinle. An engraving of Ingres' "Harem"—one of that painter's famous studies of the figure, some sketches for which are in Sir Frederick Leighton's library—hangs near the door, and further on are several noble single figures from the designs of Jean Goujon, the ill-fated sculptor murdered in the St. Bartholomew massacre. Nor does a grand old Doge-picture—undoubtedly Venetian, but anonymous, being



STUDY OF A HEAD.

what is called in Italy a *quadro di scuola*—do much to break the rule of black-and-white. Next to this anteroom is the central hall, an apartment, like all in the house except the studio, of moderate size. The floor is very dark and polished, with a centre of Italian mosaic, upon which stands a great brass pot, filled in summer with a shrub in flower. One wall is lustrous with the rich blue of old Cairene tiles, which line it entirely; in the lowest angle of the staircase the front of an inlaid Persian cabinet forms a little balcony upon which stands a peacock, some of whose loveliest tints are matched by the Persian and Rhodian ware with which the house shines; inside the little balcony are cushions of olive-amber satin with embroideries. The open staircase is hung with pictures, one wall being covered with a copy of Michael Angelo's cartoon of "Adam." An unfinished picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds is one of his successor's most interesting possessions. It is a

portrait group of Rockingham and Burke, the latter sitting as secretary at his leader's side, holding a pen, while Lord Rockingham is placed in that famous "sitter's chair" which the present President bought and presented to the Royal Academy in memory of its father. Below this suggestive canvas are some smaller works: a study by Sir Joshua; a sketch of the Venetian school—blots of fine colour; a small "Resurrection," also Venetian, the work of some minor painter, but full of a certain quality which modern art can scarcely compass; and a head from the pencil of Tintoretto.

Then follow a noble and graceful portrait of the President by Mr. Watts, in which the sitter is full-face, leaning on his hand, and Sir Frederick Leighton's masterly portrait of the scarred and rugged profile of Captain Burton. A few steps further up, and we can see one of the beautiful early works of Mr. Edgar Barclay; a landscape by Signor Costa; a scene of peasant piety by M. Legros—such as he used to paint so frequently in years gone by—women in white caps on their knees; and a woman and child in the open air, by Mr. Armstrong. At the head of the stairs is an early design of the great plague of Florence, by Sir Frederick himself, done at the age of twenty or twenty-one. Two tiny sketches—rather pencil-notes than drawings—by Wilkie and John Leech, that of the latter the first idea for a *Punch* design, detain us for a moment as we pass into the smaller studio, which is a kind of anteroom to the great *atelier*, and is lighted from above and furnished with an ingenious arrangement of blinds, so that models may be studied there for certain effects. This apartment has tawny-brown walls; the further end contains an alcove raised by three steps, the end of which is formed by a screen of Oriental wooden trellis-work coloured black and fitted with four little windows looking into that lovely divan, or Arab Hall, which is the glory of Sir Frederick Leighton's home. Our illustration is a drawing of the little studio, looking towards the alcove. A rare Persian pot fills a niche in the screen, while Persian tiles (none of more recent and many of much older date than the seventeenth century) line the roof and sides of the recess. Of these tiles the house contains an unparalleled collection, made by their possessor in the course of many years. In this scheme of decoration, blue is the reigning colour, but nothing like the blue of "blue-and-white" china. The colour of the tiles inclines to purple at times, and to green at others, and the white of the ground is very subtly tinted, but the magnificence of the tints is enhanced by the lustre of the material, some of the tiles producing an effect between marble and velvet—more lucid than the one and deeper than the other.

A door communicates with the great studio. A tall window running up into the roof, large easels at one end with their load of pictures, walls covered with studies, a screen or two with rare and lovely Oriental draperies thrown over them, and a quantity of splendid pottery at the unoccupied end of the room—these are the objects that first meet the eye. An incident of the studio, which our drawing reproduces, is interesting as giving that drawing a date:—Near the window stands

a group sketched in clay, a lovely composition of two female figures reposing, one lying pillowed across the breast of the other, both being clad in real draperies, of which the folds are the study of days. On the canvas near is the beginning of that noble picture—"An Idyll"—from which Signor Amendola made this clay group, and from this in turn the picture will be finished. One of the most peaceful and joyous of all the painter's compositions, this is also one of his grandest. It is invested with a serene and heroic simplicity, and with the natural grandeur of the golden age; a shepherd sits piping; the two nymphs are half asleep; a great landscape stretches in front.

The walls of Sir Frederick's studio are thickly hung with studies—landscape scraps, and bits of architectural accessories, which are the fruits of many a summer and autumn ramble: studies of light in the East, studies of colour of Sicily, studies of rocks in the desert, of seas in the south and of skies in the north, one little panel flickering with the blue of an Italian summer, another green with the summer of England, and each of them, however slight, touched with the completeness of truth and with a great charm of workmanship.

If the studio is interesting as containing the *genius loci*, the divan is, as we have said, a treasury of research and taste. A small Oriental hall, red brick externally, and forming a little wing to the house, it rises up under a mosque-like dome. The internal plan of this hall is like that of La Ziza at Palermo—a square with deep recesses on the three sides, and a wide entrance from the corridor, with lintels supported by four massive columns. Each recess is vaulted, and in the angle of the wall are slender columns supporting the archivolt. Over these runs a frieze, while niches and icicle-work bring the square into an octagon, from which rises the dome, with its eight arched windows, these windows being filled with the pierced plaster sashes of Cairo and coloured Oriental glass. The floor is a marble mosaic of black and white. There is a deep skirting of black marble, the walls above it being entirely covered with Persian tiles as far up as the gold frieze which runs round the hall. Above are horizontal bands of black and white, into which the black marble archivolts of the recesses rise to the soffit of the cornice. An Arab frieze of scroll-work on a dark-blue ground forms the cornice to the dome, while the dome itself is of gold. Two large windows of clear glass fill the right and left recesses, covered with gilded wooden trellises from Cairo. The slender marble columns supporting the arches of the recess are of an exquisite warm white, resembling the tint of antique statues. A panel of the divan illustrates very amusingly the ingenuity which religionists of all ages have exhibited in evading the more hampering requirements of their creeds. It is well known that Mohammedanism, as professed by the larger part of its adherents, prohibits the representation in art of any living creature, brute or human. Some long dead and gone Moslem, who owned a stately pleasure-dome like this of Sir Frederick Leighton's, who had cultivated tastes and was a patron of the arts, hit upon the ingenious device of having a line drawn through the necks of every beast and bird in a beautiful

decorative composition which covers a large panel of tiles; the design is thus preserved, but the throats of the creatures are cut, and the conscience of the Moslem is inviolate. Among these exquisite tiles, by the way, the connoisseur recognises distinctive qualities—in the Rhodian, spots of a strong deep red; in the Persian, the colour of a purple grape. As may easily be understood, the task of adapting several pieces to the walls without breaking the design, after the chances and hazards of collection and transportation, was not easy to Mr. George Aitchison, A.R.A.,



THE MUSIC LESSON.

to whose designs the whole house, with the divan, is due, and of whose talent it forms a brilliant memorial. Often a tile necessary to the continuity of the pattern was wanted, and there was then nothing for it but to call in modern Occidental



ELIJAH AND THE ANGEL.

skill. This has been supplied by Mr. William de Morgan (son of the late famous mathematician), whose labours and successes in the arts of pottery and porcelain are well known, and who has produced imitations of the Cairene tiles which for lustre and colour are scarcely to be distinguished from the originals. A marble fountain basin, with its central jet, occupies the centre of the mosaic floor.

The hundred details of the decoration of this radiant hall it is, of course,

impossible to enumerate; but a word must be devoted to its anteroom, which opens, as we have said, out of the central hall. This apartment has, like the divan, a mosaic floor and tiled walls, the latter being in this case uniform in their colour, which is a dark transparent blue-green. The flat ceiling is gilded, and in the middle stands, on a pedestal, an excellent cast in green bronze of the beautiful "Narcissus" in the museum at Naples. Our illustration is taken from the south window, looking obliquely through the divan and the anteroom into the central hall.

The greatest treasure of the drawing-room is, perhaps, a small and very beautiful Constable to which no ordinary interest attaches. Every one knows that Constable was the founder of the great modern French school of landscape — which has its source, not in Gaspar Poussin and the decadence, but in Gainsborough and the English revival; and here is the very picture which, exhibited in Paris under Charles X., and rewarded with a gold medal, so wrought upon the taste and temper of the schools of France that it proved to be the little grain of mustard-seed which has developed into so magnificent a growth of art.

Sir Frederick Leighton has hung below this historic and precious little picture one that may be considered its noblest outcome—a fine work by Daubigny; while close by is a Corot—one of the loveliest in England, which is another result of the evolution of Constable's influence. Also from the hand of Corot are four large upright studies, brushed rapidly by the master in Decamps' studio. They have not, therefore, the same kind of value as his outdoor work, but they are full of beauty and truth. A David Cox in the same room is rivalled in interest by one of Mason's pastorals, the first English picture he ever painted—the first, that is, of those lovely works which have given laws to a little school.



AN ATHLETE STRANGLING A PYTHON.

The President's home is all the more delightful for forming so complete a contrast to the majority of artists' homes. It is notorious that the reaction from the violent colour from which the world had long suffered has resulted in a general renunciation of strong colour. Nothing could be too quiet and too reserved to please eyes which shrank from the cold crudities and the sickly brightness of the "emerald" greens and Prussian blues, the pinks and greys (both adulterated with violet), the chocolates, and slates, and magentas, of so many years. Subdued and beautiful tertiary tints, rather dark than light, became the taste and then the fashion, so that the value and charm of radiant and powerful colour seemed in danger of being forgotten, and background tints bade fair to take too prominent a place. Many artists' houses, therefore, with which we are familiar, are, except for touches of brilliance from the East in their accidental ornaments, almost limited to a negative beauty of tint, whereas the house in Holland Park Road is all alive with colour and gold. And the contrast is not one of colour only, but of material. English habits and English tastes have always inclined to the use of homely rather than stately materials. The most beautiful houses in the country are built with brick rather than with stone, and the most beautiful rooms are mounted with wood, not marble, paved with oak, not mosaic, lined with paper, carpeted and draped with stuffs which are soft, pliable, and sheltering. Nor is this national tendency altogether the result of climate, for it is cold enough in Italy every winter for the enjoyment of small rooms, and warm enough in England every summer for the luxury of marble and fountains. The divan is, then, a complete change from wood to gold, from the effects of dusk to those of day. By this change is gained the important element of *reflections*. Beautiful English house-decoration is almost always opaque in surface and dull, whereas Sir Frederick Leighton has by means of his translucent surfaces reproduced something of that secret charm of Italy and the East—reflected light. Nothing so strikingly proves the peculiar *quality* of Oriental colouring as the curious shallowness and insipidity of the Occidental world as it meets the eye which is fresh from this house in Holland Park Road. After it, the prettiest things in the shops and the houses (and both in these improved days contain things which are really pretty) lack light and depth. But the greatest charm of Sir Frederick Leighton's house lies in this—that it is the abode, not merely of taste, and the taste of the time, but of a kindness and courtesy which will never be out of date or fashion.

The year 1885 saw honours bestowed upon several English artists, the official chief of whom, Sir Frederick Leighton, accepted a Baronetcy in place of the Knighthood traditionally associated with the Presidentship of the Royal Academy.



*Your truly
Erskine Nicol*

(From a Photograph by A. E. Fradelle.)

ERSKINE NICOL, A.R.A.



HE early days of Mr. Erskine Nicol form a striking example of the overwhelming influence which a deep-seated and sincere instinct or love for art has on the character. The story of his youth shows how, when the divine fire is inborn, it is impossible to quench it, and how, in spite of every obstacle and all opposition, it is sure to assert itself in the end. Our present subject's success illustrates in a remarkable degree the fact that the spark once

kindled will maintain its glow in the face of the most chilling and damping circumstances, that the fire is still there in all its intensity, although it may be hidden from the sight of the world, and that it will finally leap up into a bright burning flame under the influence of the favourable breeze which is certain to blow sooner or later.

Erskine Nicol was born in Scotland, at Leith, in 1825, and displayed, from childhood, a predilection and aptitude for drawing; and he admits that he lost no opportunity as he grew up for indulging his favourite pursuit, even at the sacrifice of all other studies. Remembering that fifty years ago the career of an artist was looked upon as one of the most precarious a young man could adopt, we are not surprised to hear that his father did all he could to discourage his boy's enthusiasm for the all-absorbing pursuit. When it is also remembered that the elder Nicol's means rendered it necessary for the younger to set about earning his own living as soon as possible, we shall find no difficulty in understanding the opposition that was made by his parents to the lad's wishes, and in excusing a certain blindness to the fair promise doubtless given by his earliest efforts.

He was not to be put off from his love, however; and, as a compromise, he was at length apprenticed to a decorative painter, only quitting this partially congenial occupation as he gradually found means of earning something by his pencil. A pretty just idea can be formed of the precocity of his talent, and his general determination and independence of character, from the fact that he managed to get admitted a student of the Trustees' Academy, Edinburgh, then under the sway of Sir William Allan and Thomas Duncan, before he had completed his thirteenth year.

About the age of twenty, young Erskine Nicol went to Dublin, where he remained some four years; and then it was that, during his rural rambles, he formed that acquaintance with Ireland and the Irish which led him to adopt the life and character of the country as his principal study. It was in the year 1851, after his return to Edinburgh, that he first made an impression on the public by exhibiting, in the Royal Scottish Academy, six subjects illustrative more or less of Hibernian individuality, especially from its humorous and laughter-loving side. Settling down in what may be called his native city, he became a constant exhibitor, success following success at such a pace that he was soon elected Associate, and ultimately a full member, of the august body that regulates the destinies of art in the northern capital.

True to the instincts of his countrymen, he was not long ere he found his way to London; and, from the year 1863, he has seldom or never failed to be represented upon the walls of Trafalgar Square and Burlington House, the ever-increasing merit of his work leading, in the year 1866, to his election to an Associateship in the Royal Academy.

Such art as Mr. Nicol's can never fail to be highly popular; the keen incisive observation of character which it displays will unceasingly appeal to a very large audience, and when, as in his case, it is combined with high artistic qualities, the

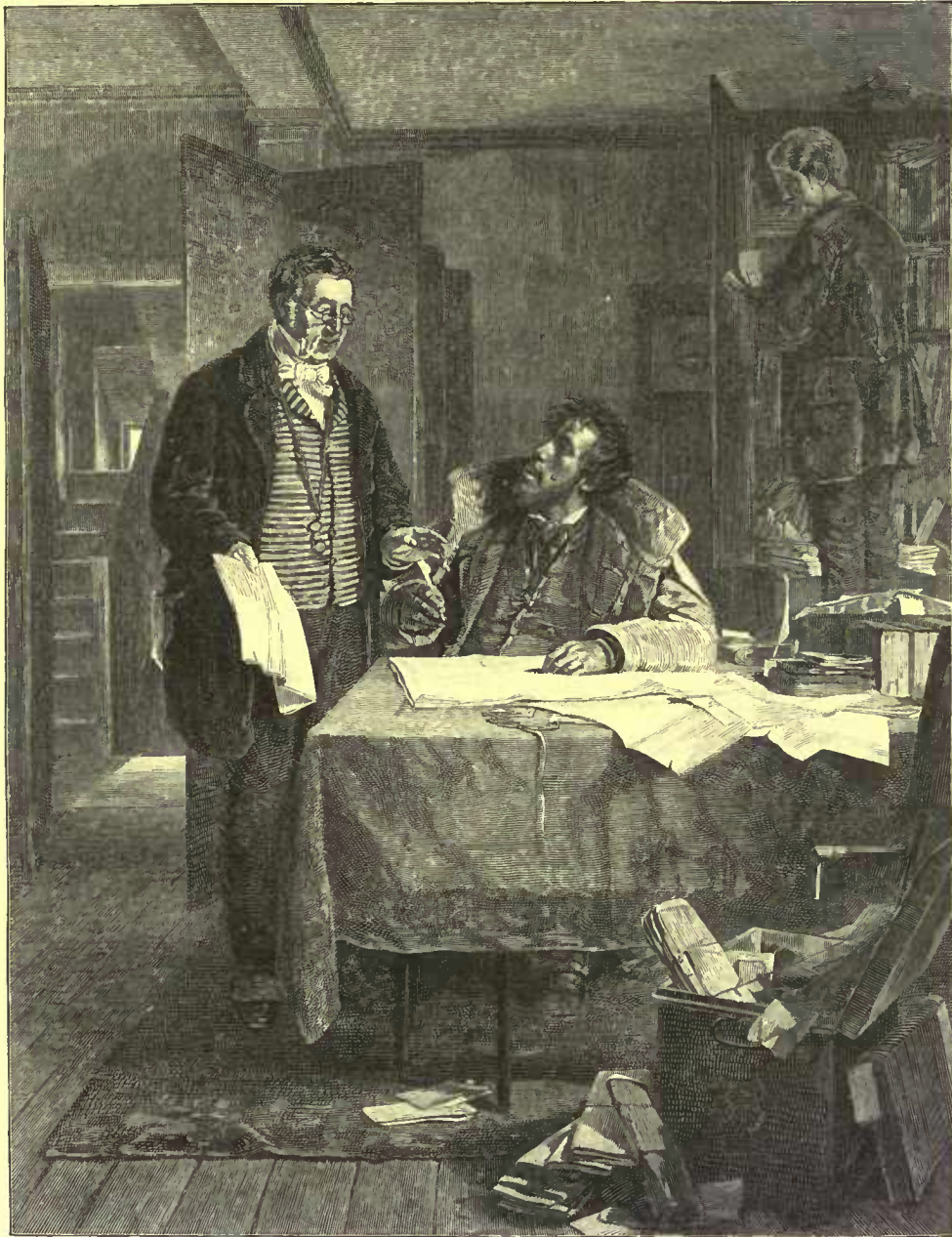


UNWILLINGLY TO SCHOOL.

(In the Possession of Mr. R. G. Cooper.)

discriminating few, equally with the less thoughtful many, are ready to render homage. If any proof were needed, it can be found in the eagerness to possess engravings from his pictures which is shown by the same class of collectors who, not in a position to acquire the pictures themselves, gather together and highly

prize the replicas in black and white of the works of such masters as Wilkie and Webster. What these latter have done in the way of portraying the homely, familiar,



PADDY'S MARK.

(By Permission of A. S. Dixon, Esq.)

everyday side of British life, Mr. Nicol does for the Irish; whilst in giving every phase of humour, from the quiet, puzzled expression of the countryman "Among the Old Masters," down to the racy fun and boisterous mirth of a Donnybrook Fair, he is not to be excelled. As examples of widely-known works, Scotch and Irish

in subject, we may name "Both Puzzled;" "Steady, Johnnie, Steady;" "Always Tell the Truth"—an old Scotchwoman admonishing her grandson; "The Sabbath Day"—another old Scotchwoman going bravely through some exceedingly "saft" weather, on what looks like a trudge of many miles, to kirk; and "Looking Out for a Safe Investment," which humorously suggests graver deliberations than those of two little schoolboys confidentially advising on the contents of a very small



AMONG THE OLD MASTERS.

(By Permission of Thomas Faed, R.A.)

shop-front. These are amongst the most popular of the very numerous engravings "after Erskine Nicol."

There is no need to go much further back than 1869 in order to recall to the reader's memory the steady progress of the artist in the estimation of the critical public. Besides the pictures just mentioned, and those of which we are fortunate enough to be enabled to give engravings, the following will readily be remembered as specimens of his prowess:—"Did it Pout with its Bessie?" "The Hope of the Family," "The Renewal of Lease Refused," "Waiting for the Train," "A Deputation," "Missed It," "Paying the Rint," "A Country Booking-Office," "A China Merchant," "The Cross Roads"—all notable pictures; "The Disputed Boundary,"

exhibited in 1869; "The Fisher's Knot," in 1871; "Pro Bono Publico" and "Past Work," in 1873; "The New Vintage," in 1875; "His Legal Adviser," in 1877—an interesting study of grim character, which shows a litigious Irish countryman putting his case, evidently a bad one, to a hard-headed lawyer; "Under a Cloud," "The Missing Boat," and "The Lonely Tenant of the Glen," in 1878—the last named a pathetic figure of an old Scotchwoman loaded with branches for her solitary hearth; and in 1879, "Interviewing the Member." "A Storm at Sea" (1876) was more serious in subject than is usual with Mr. Nicol. It shows a group—not themselves storm-tossed, but watchers of the waves. An old salt scans the horizon eagerly with his glass; his comrade looks out with a thoughtful action of the hand. Behind them stands an old woman, whose heart is more ominously pre-occupied. Among the painter's latest pictures is "A Screw Loose in the Lease" (1885), thoroughly characteristic in matter and manner.

One can readily imagine, from the subjects which he has made his own, and the thorough way in which he has understood and thrown himself into the spirit and character of the Irish people, that the experiences of Mr. Nicol during his long acquaintance with the Emerald Isle must have given him a store of anecdote, almost unequalled, perhaps, for its peculiar fun by any that may have been laid up by other explorers of the highways and byways of "ould Ireland." Very enviable would it be, we take it, to hear him recount the stories and sayings of his models; for it is clear that, making them speak to us, as he all but does, from his canvas, he must have a peculiar faculty for drawing them out, if it were only for the purpose of creating the especial expression which he requires at the moment.



INTERVIEWING THE MEMBER.



A Reverie.



John E. Millais

(From the Portrait by G. F. Watts, R.A.)

SIR JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS, R.A.

JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS was born in 1829, in Portland Place, Southampton, but he came of an old Jersey stock. His earliest clear memories, however, are of Dinan in Brittany. He still speaks with keen delight of the picturesque old tower on the *fosse*, in which the family was living; and Millais is a pregnant instance of the influence of romantic mediæval architecture upon the imagination of a gifted child. Mozart composed at six; Millais painted at the same age; and the singular precocity of these great masters did *not* indicate a power forward but not lasting. Dinan was, of course, full of soldiers, but Millais was evidently most strongly impressed by

the artillery. His early tentatives in art were, naturally, pictures of soldiers; and he tells, still with a certain sense of triumph, a little anecdote connected with his childish drawings of the showy heroes in their splendid uniforms.

The boy's military drawings, which were altogether surprising performances for a child of six, fell into the hands of an artillery officer, who, in his delight at the powers of the precocious artist, showed them about to his brother officers. These latter wholly refused to believe that such work was the production of the bright little stranger in Dinan; and their incredulity led to a memorable wager. This wager was one of a dinner. The friendly officer produced his evidence, and won his bet. Some thirty were present at the lost wager dinner; and one of those present—the infant artist—remembers vividly the pride and pleasure which thrilled his childish bosom at this early recognition of his power in art. One more anecdote.

The scene shifts from quaint and charming old Dinan to the studio of a then President of the Royal Academy—Sir Martin Archer Shee. Art had progressed in the meantime with the juvenile but ardent student, who had reached the ripe age of eight or nine, and his mother brought him to the President to ask advice about the lad's future studies and career. The awe-inspiring President was no great painter, but a good official, and almost necessarily a fairly good judge. Speaking without looking at the boy's drawings, he said, from his sumptuous altitude of position, coldly, "Better make the boy a chimney-sweeper than an artist!" Fancy the little, widely-opened ears that heard this crushing statement. However, the great President unbent, relaxed, became human, and actually consented to inspect the drawings. A sight of these wholly changed his tone, and he passed into warm admiration, and bestowed kindly advice. The President expressed his opinion that it was the duty of the friends of such a boy to give him every opportunity of studying and pursuing art; and this needful opportunity was sought in the art-school of a certain Mr. Sass. To these preparatory classes Millais was sent in his tenth year—doubtless the youngest student who, in modern times, has entered upon a technical professional education in art. His distinction became evident from the first. He lost no time in gaining a medal—that of the Society of Arts; and when the dispenser of these honours awarded it, he looked with surprise at the little child he was to decorate. At eleven years old he went into the Academy schools; at thirteen he won the medal for drawing from the antique; at fifteen he paused in his chalks and crayons to begin work in colour. Every academical honour that was for students to win he gained in his brilliant school career; and he was but a boy of seventeen when he exhibited his "Pizarro," a young and scenic kind of picture, showing astonishing cleverness and capability and promise, and everything indeed except individuality, that quality almost impossible to youth. No boy, except a singularly conceited sort of boy, has effrontery enough to be original; and "Pizarro," with its next year's successor, "Elgiva," was a true and hopeful boy's picture, painted in a school, and as much as possible like the pictures of his masters.

But the time of pupilage was short. There were but two years between the

"Elgiva" and one of the most epoch-making pictures of the English school—Millais' "Isabella." This was painted in a school, indeed, but in a school of scholars, all young, all ardent, moved by one impulse, and owning no tutors except Nature herself, and the masters who lived between Cimabue and Michelangiolo. This little band of reformers comprised at first four painters—Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Holman Hunt, James Collinson, and John Everett Millais; two writers, William Michael Rossetti and Frederic George Stephens; and one sculptor, Thomas Woolner. These signed their works "P.R.B.," for "Pre-Raphaelite Brother," and many other young people, who are remembered as "very Pre-Raphaelite," but who did not use the initials, did not properly belong to the confraternity.

But the time was hard upon it. All the fairly well-read critics had been formed upon a "corrupt following of the Apostles" of the later Italian art. They were in a manner outraged by the young Pre-Raphaelitism. It was a thing subversive to their principles and their habits of judging; and destructive of their vocabulary. The press was exceptionally severe, and abated its rigours only with time, and after a new voice in the national literature, the voice of John Ruskin, had uttered itself. The thunders of censure fell most violently upon Holman Hunt and Millais. And it is curious to observe how differently the two artists have lived down the ridicule and dislike which they endured in 1849. The one has changed in nothing from the principles of his zealous youth, and the world has more or less conformed to him; the other has replied by such "infinite variety" that he has won his foes with one hand and kept his friends with the other. But at the moment Millais was as uncompromising as were the staunchest of his brothers. "Isabella," which startled men in their art and literature, he immediately capped with "Christ in the House of His Parents" (popularly known as "The Carpenter's Shop"), which shocked them in their art and religion.

A word as to the composition and character of these two noteworthy pictures, which have been seen again of late in London and at Liverpool, but which are still not much more than a tradition to many who know the "Huguenot" and the "Black Brunswicker" by heart. The subject of the "Isabella" was much less familiar to the public of the early Victorian period than it is to our Keats-loving days. Boccaccio himself was, of course, and is, and will remain, little read, and the young English poet's rendering of the Boccaccio story was not popular. By a natural affinity, the young Pre-Raphaelites revived Keats, and the Italian tale suited them. Holman Hunt was the first who ever painted a Keats picture in his "Flight of Madeline and Porphyro," from the "Eve of St. Agnes"—which he has followed in after-years with "Isabella and the Pot of Basil"—and immediately after it came Millais' "Isabella." This picture betrays at the first glance its determination to be rigidly exempt from the received habits of pictorial arrangement. A long table reaches into the background. It is spread for a meal, and bordered with guests, and so turned that the line of diners on the spectator's right have their faces visible in profile or quasi-profile from the first to the last. The row of diners to the left

show only three profiles and a half. All the heads are portraits, and in some cases the names have been preserved. Dante Rossetti is at the extreme end on the right drinking from a glass, with a protruded under lip. Mr. William Bell Scott, about



THE SISTERS.

(From the Collection of C. P. Matthews, Esq.)

half-way along, wipes his mouth with a napkin. Mrs. Hodgkinson sat for the charming figure of Isabella, and a young contemporary artist is the tyrannical brother, whose long leg stretches across the foreground to kick Isabella's dog. The rather ignominious figure of the serving-man is also a portrait. And it may be noted, as a detail of the working of Pre-Raphaelite principles, that the good-natured friends who sat as models to the brotherhood frequently had their feelings outraged

by the scorn and insult of the press as to their personal appearance, reproduced with a faithfulness of resemblance only too conscientious, as they knew. This was particularly galling, as the Pre-Raphaelites took their time, and the sittings were long. The detail in "Isabella" is simply wonderful. Executed as it is, in the manner of a handicraft, it is not such as any painter could pride himself upon achieving; and the perfection of care with which it is elaborated is a sign of the selflessness and love of labour which the reform of art was intended to bring about. The colour throughout is singularly strong, direct, and brilliant.

The "Carpenter's Shop" insisted still more emphatically upon the realism of portraiture. Millais, however, took his realism with a certain wilfulness. He did not go to the East to paint his personages in the probabilities of place and type; he did as an early Italian was obliged to do in untravelled times—took his models from among his neighbours. Millais' St. Joseph is obviously a Scotch tradesman, his St. Mary is again his sister-in-law, Mrs. Hodgkinson, his Christ a child from a London nursery, his St. John a little Italian of hurdy-gurdies or plaster images. With this there is a certain condescension to likelihood, inasmuch as St. Joseph's legs are bare, and the young Baptist (who bears a bowl of allusive water) is girt with camels' hair. Throughout this picture, as in "Isabella," there is an excessive ingenuity of allegoric incident. The child Christ has a "wound in the midst of His hand," which has been done by chance with a nail. A flock of sheep outside are wandering, lacking a shepherd. All this is surely, if we may apply Leigh Hunt's literary canon to painting, fancy rather than imagination. But perhaps the picture offended most in the lack of beauty in the Virgin's face. Having chosen no unlovely model, Millais rather wilfully disfigured her by banded hair of the most "trying" arrangement, covered with an ungraceful veil or shawl, and by an expression of rather dreary suffering in the lined forehead. The figure and face are those of a distressed London needlewoman of middle age. We should nevertheless remember that the young painter had no intention whatever of painting a beauty or a fresh and happy woman. The beauty liked by the world, and common on canvas, was to him an excessively trivial and worthless thing, and the signs of labour and of privation were dear and worthy. And whatever may be said of this most remarkable picture, the fact that it was painted in protest against poor and vain and fatuous conventions should have preserved it from scorn and derision. Its painter was a boy of twenty-one. This is what the *Times* said of it:—"Mr. Millais' principal picture is, to speak plainly, revolting. The attempt to associate the Holy Family with the meanest details of a carpenter's shop, with no conceivable omission of misery, of dirt, and even disease, all finished with the same loathsome minuteness, is disgusting; and with a surprising power of imitation, this picture serves to show how far mere imitation may fall short, by dryness and conceit, of all dignity and truth." It is no secret that in after-years—in, say, the middle stage of his career—Millais did not stand by the "Carpenter's Shop"—nay, that he would not have been inconsolable if some accident had happened to the canvas; but that reaction, too, has passed away, and doubtless

in the calm of reconsideration the Sir John Millais of to-day is moved to give his own respect to work which has gained and kept the respect of the whole world.

With this were exhibited a small portrait of Mr. Wyatt, of Oxford, with his granddaughter, and "Ferdinand and Ariel." This fanciful group from Shakespeare was almost as much disliked as the composition from the Bible. The model for Ferdinand was Mr. Stephens, a P.R.B., and the art-critic of many years' standing. The Ariel is a green bubble of the air, a kind of transparent goblin, surrounded by elfs akin to himself. Perhaps this is not altogether the spiritual creature of our *Tempest*. But the fact that it is the Ariel of an original young mind should go for something. Millais' Ferdinand comes forward with his hand to his ears to catch the enchanted music. The *Times* considered this picture less offensive in feeling, but not more pardonable in style, than its companion. Nor was the "Ferdinand" approved by the patron for whom it had been painted. Delighted to get a commission for a hundred pounds, Millais had spared no thought or pains; but the order was cancelled and the picture returned. The young painter was consoled, however, by a visit from Mr. Richard Ellison, who bought "Ferdinand" for fifty pounds more than the original price.

The pictures of 1851 were "Mariana," "The Woodman's Daughter," and "The Return of the Dove to the Ark." The "Mariana" was an audacious experiment in colour, and got its full measure of contumely. "The Return of the Dove" shows two heavily-built, thick-set young girls fondling the dove as they stand together with their feet in the straw of the floating menagerie. The colour in the girls' dresses is singularly pure and fresh, and there is we know not what of innocence and emotion in their action. "The Woodman's Daughter" illustrates an early poem of Mr. Coventry Patmore's, who was a comrade, though not a brother, in the Pre-Raphaelite movement. This poet has shown in his work, by the way, much of the same evolution as has taken place in the art of his companions. At the outset extremely Pre-Raphaelite in detail, he has since taken a larger manner, with an increase rather than a loss of vital truth and sincerity. The poem here illustrated has, with passages of extraordinary power, several stanzas of emphatic and determined plainness. It is one of these that the picture treats of. The high-born boy and the woodman's child meet in the wood:—

"She went merely to think she helped;
And whilst he hacked and sawed,
The rich squire's son, a young boy then,
For whole days, as if awed,
Stood by and gazed alternately
At Gerald and at Maud.

"He sometimes in a sullen tone
Would offer fruits, and she
Always received his gift with an air
So unreserved and free
That half-feigned distance soon became
Familiarity."



THE FLOOD.
(From the Collection of C. P. Matthews, Esq.)

The verses are worth quoting as a fair specimen of the literature of Pre-Raphaelitism in its first youth. Millais shows Maud as a plain little girl, with an innocent face; the boy is giving her strawberries. And as strawberries were out of season, a sum of a certain importance to Pre-Raphaelites was expended in getting a basket in Covent Garden, and after the strawberries had posed for their portraits, they were "devoutly and thankfully" eaten by the painter and his serious young friends together. There is a quantity of fine painting in the moss and grass and tree-stems. The late Mr. Hodgkinson, who possessed this picture, with a number of other important works by his half-brother, has bequeathed it finally to the South Kensington Museum.

The year 1852 is important in the Millais annals. In the May of that year the most popular of our modern painters exhibited a picture that won the world. But, curiously enough, seeing that public successes are almost invariably sudden, the "Huguenot" did not win the world at once. The picture was painted as a commission for a hundred and fifty pounds, offered by a dealer, who in after-days, when the engraving had found out many thousands of the humbler patrons of art, added a modest fifty. And at first the young artist had nothing to flatter his hopes. The press, it is true, was less derisive and indignant than it had been at the new appearance of Pre-Raphaelitism (and, sooth to say, the peculiarities of the school, as presented by Millais, had begun to be perceptibly modified in the "Huguenot"), but it was sufficiently hostile. The critics began to make an effort to meet the painter on his own ground, and to convict him of errors in those points of fact to which they thought the young school in its reactionary impulse attributed a rather excessive importance. He was accused of gravely miscalculating the length of the man's right arm, which reaches a very great way round the lady's neck, of falsity to nature in painting nasturtiums in flower on the feast of St. Bartholomew, which is too late for them—but here the critics were flagrantly in error; and the usual faults were found in the matter of the lady's lack of beauty, and of the exaggerated affection bestowed by the painter upon the bricks of the garden wall. But, in fact, the face of the Catholic girl has far more fairness, of a round-cheeked, honest sort, than the Pre-Raphaelites had ever before permitted themselves in their young austerity. Her figure it is which to modern eyes lacks grace. For Millais and his brethren aimed rightly and artistically enough at abolishing the little waist as well as the enormous eyes and small mouth of vapid convention; but they were too much under the control of contemporary dressmaking to conceive an emancipation from the waist altogether—its abolition. They adhered to a gown with a full petticoat and an emphatic bodice, only they made that bodice as unconventional as they well could achieve it. The result was a severe dowdiness of effect, from which a knowledge of long-lined and shoulder-hung draperies would have relieved them. In some of their early pictures this inelegance is far more salient than in the comparatively shapely lady of the "Huguenot." The extreme length and uncompromising cut of the waists usual among the Brotherhood testify to their ascetic spirit, as well as to the poverty of invention and the evil fashions by which the early Victorian period hampered even

those most indignantly in rebellion against its taste and habits. But in spite of everything that hypercriticism could discover, the "Huguenot" was a gift to the world, a charming picture, instinct with feeling which touched the heart of a nation, and presenting a suspended situation of emotion and love, in which rests a strong human interest for ever. With the "Huguenot" appeared a small portrait of Mrs. Coventry Patmore, and "Ophelia." The latter is insistently Pre-Raphaelite in the colour, raw and positive and strong, with a disdain of the mystery, preparation, subduing—the general "cooking" of tints—to which the eyes of the world had become accustomed. Ophelia floats down under the pendent boughs with her garments still buoying her up; she sings, "incapable of her own distress." Her pallid face was studied from that of the beautiful Mrs. Dante Rossetti, whom another hand has shown us so often as a visionary Beatrice. The portrait of Mrs. Patmore is a curious little work, as fine as a miniature, but with an absence of expression which looks almost deliberate. To



AWAKE!

(By kind Permission of Henry Graves and Co., Pall Mall.)

readers and lovers (and all readers must be lovers) of "The Angel in the House" this portrait has a personal interest; for this was the poet's first wife, to whose inspiration that profound and tender poem was due, and whose praises are sung in those of the "still unpraised Honoria."

Another popular picture—though less popular than the "Huguenot"—appeared in 1853. "The Order of Release" is extremely dramatic. To say that it tells a story is to do it an injustice. It tells no more story than can be told in a scene.

It presents a spectacle, and is perfectly and legitimately pictorial. And the simplicity of the idea is such that ingenious interpreters have put themselves to pains to



THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE; OR, "IT CAN BE DONE, AND ENGLAND OUGHT TO DO IT."
(By kind Permission of Mr. Carl F. H. Bolckow, of Marston Hall.)

find accessory meanings in the group. Obviously, it signifies nothing but that which it presents—the release of a prisoner by his wife, who hands to the gaoler the order for his enfranchisement. That she, with her baby slung to her shoulder, has won it or brought it through toil and travel, is evident from the wayworn look of her naked

feet and shortened petticoats. The beauty of the picture—dramatically and not technically considered—lies in the eloquence of the two actions, especially the husband's, who, broken by suffering into a pathetic abdication of his virile self-reliance, falls on the neck of his valiant wife. Millais has not often given emotion so direct and penetrating. This picture of Scotch life in times when law itself was not even a wild justice, has made one of the most popular of the earlier Millais engravings. And that popularity existed in spite of the total lack of sentimental beauty in this heroine. For the sake of the pathetic clinging of her husband's hands, the public forgave her her square hard face and her bony figure, and also the shortness of her legs, whereby Millais vindicated and enforced a Pre-Raphaelite protest against the elegant exaggerations of long limbs. "The Order of Release" was also a commission, and it was Thackeray who had the pleasant task of handing to Millais the dealer's request. In this case, too, the model—daughter of Mr. Gray, of Bowerswell, Perthshire—was beautiful. A year later she became the painter's wife; and it required all a Pre-Raphaelite's severity to render her in so hard an aspect. With this picture was exhibited "The Proscribed Royalist, 1651," a subject somewhat too merely romantic. A cavalier, hiding in a hollow tree, kisses the hand of a lady who brings him food. She tenderly allows the kiss, but trembles under it, glancing through the trees with wide eyes. In this figure we have a decided relaxation of severities; the lady is—we should have feared to write the trivial words had we been writing with the fear of the Brotherhood before our eyes—a pretty woman.

After his marriage and his election to the Associateship, Millais exhibited pictures which here and there showed signs of vacillation—as some of his friends might call it—or of development, as the change might appear to others; and which, again, at other moments were such as would have had the blessing of the most zealous of the Brothers. A little love of melodrama, which has now and then appeared in the work of a most charmingly and humanly versatile painter, was revealed in "The Rescue." A house is on fire, the hose are seen playing outside through a window, and in the ruddy light of the blaze a helmeted fireman runs down a staircase, with its stair-carpet, to put two children into the arms of a fair-haired mother, who waits below. Where a Pre-Raphaelite is modern, he is, of course, realistically modern, and the details of this comfortable house are inevitably Philistinish. The movement is rapid and impetuous, and the expression vigorous. But what most gave the public matter for talk was the firelight. Never is the amateur critic more ready with remarks than when he is talking over effects of firelight or reflections in still water. But, if he would only believe it, nothing is more impossible to dogmatise about. Firelight affects local colour in a manner on which no one can calculate, and reflections are ruled by laws and bylaws which are too complicated for the ordinary mind to master. Nevertheless, as we have said, criticism of this kind is always volunteered with confidence. It must have given the still young and still tentative artist sensible comfort in more than common persecutions, that the annual "Academy Notes" of Mr. Ruskin were full of authoritative

and unmeasured praise. The Pre-Raphaelite critic, though a contemporary of these boy-painters, had a power and weight of utterance which won for his pen a serious attention—to say the least—not readily given to their pencils. Of “The Rescue” he wrote:—“It is the only *great* picture exhibited . . . but this is *very* great. The immortal element is in it to the full. It is easily understood, and the public very generally understand it. Various small cavils have been made at it, chiefly by conventionalists, who never ask how the thing is, but fancy for themselves how it ought to be. I have heard it said, for instance, that the fireman’s arms should not have looked so black in the red light;” after which the writer insists that black keeps almost all its blackness when compared with other colours. As to these matters of faithfulness to fact, it is curious to observe how Mr. Ruskin insists upon the merit of that kind of truth when he is praising a painter he delights to honour, and how severe he becomes when the painter has forfeited favour. In later years Millais was witheringly reprovèd by him for a wild rose drawn with four petals. But Holbein is excused for drawing a skeleton in which the number of the ribs was decided by the designer’s fancy!

About an almost forgotten picture—treating of an invalided Crimean officer at home with his family—which appeared in 1856, the same glowing-hearted enthusiast wrote:—“I thought some time ago that this painter was likely to be headed by others of the school, but Titian himself could hardly head him now. This picture is as brilliant in invention as consummate in executive power. Both this and ‘Autumn Leaves’ will rank in future among the world’s best masterpieces, and I see no limit to what the painter may hope in future to achieve. I am not sure whether he may not be destined to surpass all that has been done in figure-painting, as Turner did all past landscape.” It is impossible to repress a smile, by no means unreverential, at the artless art by which Ruskin sought, by his phrasing, to give his wildest raptures a semblance of judicial deliberation. “Autumn Leaves” has, in effect, touches of intellectual greatness. It is noble, not forgettable, a part of the artistic experience of most of us. Four girls of various ages, but all of them little girls, too young for the cheap allusions of sentimental love, stand by the heap of leaves which they are piling up for burning. They are neither sad nor gay, but infinitely serious and unconscious human beings in their transitory youth surrounded by the dying leaves of Nature in her transitory death. But we hesitate in using any emotional or picturesque phrases about a picture which has perfect reticence and self-command, and many invaluable negative qualities. Two of the girls have a certain severe beauty, the two others are unlovely in a grave and simple way; their costume and their unkempt hair, neither long nor short, their long bodies, widening where the waist of convention grows “beautifully less”—all this is a Pre-Raphaelite pronouncement of pristine emphasis. Again hear Mr. Ruskin:—This is “by far the most poetical picture the painter has yet conceived, and also, so far as I know, the first instance existing of a perfectly painted twilight. It is as easy



TWO FAIR MAIDENS.

(From a Drawing on Wood.)

as it is common to give obscurity to twilight, but to give the glow within its darkness is another matter; and though Giorgione might have come near the glow, he never gave the valley mist. Note also the subtle difference between the

purple of the long near range of hills and the blue of the distant peak emerging beyond." To the art-student of a later day—one educated more or less among the more quickly and subtly caught impressions of natural effect, as taken by the art of France—the landscape and the sky of "Autumn Leaves" may seem somewhat ponderous and too suggestive of deliberate pigment. But it would be as futile for the critic to-day to judge the young Millais without remembering how distinctively he was an Englishman, as it was for the critic of 1850 to condemn him without recognising his principles as a Pre-Raphaelite.

In the same year appeared "The Child of the Regiment"—a child wounded by a stray shot in the interior of a church, and laid upon a tomb. Also "The Blind Girl," of which the landscape background was studied at Winchelsea. This breezy place of downs and flocks Millais persuaded Thackeray to visit, and the novelist made his own landscape studies there for his never-to-be-finished story, "Denis Duval."

In 1857 Millais lost the voice of Ruskin. He was gradually, indeed, to gain the voices of a nation, a very chorus of praise, but the most thrilling word in contemporary English literature was to be either lifted up against him, or silent for him. It was "Sir Isumbras" that did the mischief. To the candid spectator it looks a fairly Pre-Raphaelite picture in every sense. The scene is a summer twilight lighting a river; across a fording-place rides a knight in golden armour, giving a lift to two poor children. There is great beauty in the landscape. The knight's figure is dignified, and somewhat more broadly painted than was then the painter's wont; the horse has been called a "plum-coloured" steed, and his proportions are perhaps a little doubtful. If it is difficult to see wherein "Sir Isumbras at the Ford" gave Mr. Ruskin offence—offence which was positive pain—none the less certain is it that its painter did in effect begin to change at the time he painted it—began to take the road which led him to his Velasquez reaction; so that his old loving critic's eye was certainly keen to see. "I see with consternation," he wrote, "that it was not the Parnassian rock which Mr. Millais was ascending, but the Tarpeian. The change in his manner from the year of the 'Ophelia' and 'Mariana' to 1857 is not merely fall—it is catastrophe—not merely a loss of power, but reversal of principle. . . . His excellence has been effaced 'as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down.'" The principal error "in pictorial grammar," he proceeds, "is the painting of figures in twilight as bright as yellow and vermillion could make them, while the towers and hills far above, and far more exposed to light, are yet dark and blue." Sir John Millais, in these later days, defends the truth of his effect, nevertheless, as true to the nature he had sedulously loved.

From this year, or about this year, those "Notes on the Academy," by which John Ruskin had made and marred many a painter, ceased. The critic had lost his happy faith in his young Pre-Raphaelites. When, many years later, in 1875, he resumed them for one year, through his delight in a picture of Mr. Leslie's, he

found Millais painting a "Deserted Garden" with a four-petalled wild rose in it. He had some reason then for charging the painter of "Ophelia" with a disregard of the facts of flowers.

The two canvases exhibited with "Sir Isumbras" were of no great importance; but two years later there was a noteworthy picture, "The Vale of Rest," which has been little seen since, a great deal modified and repainted, it helped to represent the painter at the 1862 International. The subject is powerful. It is twilight again, and a long purple cloud—"cigar-shaped" it was called when the picture first puzzled the world—lies across the light. In a convent cemetery, one brawny nun, putting all her simple power into her work, with veil thrown back and sleeves tucked up, is shovelling out a new grave. A younger sits upon another grave with her solemn face in thought. It was the ugliness of this woman, in whom the public hoped to see a trivial love-story, or a sentimental regret, or at least a cheaply-effective contrast to the ill-favoured digger, which caused the picture to be disliked; and this point was surrendered by the painter, who in after-years put in a beautiful face (Miss Lane, daughter of the late Richard Lane, A.R.A., being his sitter), but kept the serious and unsentimental intention of the expression.

In 1860 came "The Black Brunswicker," only less popular than "The Huguenot," but far less simple and pathetic. The girl (painted from Miss Kate Dickens, now Mrs. Perugini) is clad in a white satin dress, the sheen of which, very deliberately rendered, delighted the public taste. In 1862 there was another wonderful dress, a brown silk worn by a blonde in "Trust Me." A father in "pink" on a hunting morning (he is an admirable portrait of Mr. Lane) holds out his hand to his daughter for a letter which for her own innocent reasons she will not show. She stands holding it behind her back with purity and candour in her charming face. Her father will certainly trust her, as he ought. The public, easily puzzled, was not quite certain as to who it was that was intended to speak the words; but, in fact, the title was left in its ambiguous state simply because Millais found it difficult to decide whether "Father, Trust Me," or "Daughter, Trust Me," would be the more appropriate. To the same year belongs "The Ransom," a romantic subject. We have failed to trace the history or to find the precise date of painting of "Apple Blossoms," a kind of Spring companion to "Autumn Leaves," but it was one of the Millais pictures at the International Exhibition of 1862.

From this time on the development of the painter's manner became rapid. The Pre-Raphaelite idea disappeared. In his own person Millais seemed to live through and experience the evolution of the Renaissance. He had been Fra Angelico or Perugino; he became Velasquez; he became Sir Joshua Reynolds. Surely no one should condemn an order of variation which took place in the man according to the same laws by which it took place in the world. "The Eve of St. Agnes" (1863) gave rise to a controversy, such as people love. Was Keats right in describing moonlight as transmitting the colour of a stained window? We fear that the best authorities decided by experience that the moon recognises

local colours very little, if at all. However this might be, the moonlight was a puzzle. The Princess of Wales, "doing" her first Royal Academy, in days when her English was not idiomatic, did not at first know what to make of it. "Ah," she said, after a moment, "I see, moonshine!" And the enemies of "St. Agnes" said, rather slangily, that the work was, in fact, moonshine. But a juster judgment will decide that this very beautiful picture has for its principal fault the placing of Madeline's figure so that it faces the bed, instead of keeping steadily the back to the bed and the face to the window, which was a condition of the charm, and by which alone the "warm gules" could be made to fall upon her breast. At the same period Millais was painting a series on the Parables, of which we are not sure whether he ever executed—at least in oils—more than two: the fine picture of "The Enemy Sowing Tares," and a beautiful candlelight composition, "The Lost Piece of Money," with the single figure of the woman. This latter work was destroyed by a gas explosion. In 1863 appeared "My First Sermon," one of the painter's little girls in red cloak and crimped hair, to be soon followed by "My Second Sermon"—both of immense popularity. In 1864 Millais became a full Academician.

"The Romans Leaving Britain" (1865) was decidedly painted with a dash—and dash was, it is scarcely necessary to say, the thing which the Pre-Raphaelite forswore. However painted, it is a noble picture. In the clasp of the Roman soldier about his island wife there is a remembrance of the eloquent action in "The Order of Release." Sorrow has broken the man; so that the vulgar comment is apt to be that he is "a poor creature." But it is not so; his tenderness is altogether virile. The woman's worn and rather hard beauty is that of a long-wedded wife, whose whole nature is wrenched by the parting. Sitting on the cliff of the British coast, she looks with hopeless eyes over the sea which will never bring her the conquering, alien husband of her youth again. 1866 was one of Millais' few "off" years. In 1867 he went on with his pictures of his children; and in 1868 appeared the beautiful group of "The Sisters," in which the mastery gained by years was strongly apparent, and the diploma picture, "Souvenir of Velasquez." More of a subject was the graceful and tender "Gambler's Wife," which shows a pale lady thoughtfully turning over the cards which the players have left overnight, and which have been the destroyers of her life. And in 1870, too, the public, who complained that their inventive painter was inclining too much to portrait, were gratified with "A Flood," "The Knight Errant," "The Widow's Mite," and "The Boyhood of Raleigh." The first refers to Mr. Charles Read's novel, "Put Yourself in his Place," where the breaking of the reservoir overwhelms a part of the town of Sheffield, drowning and wrecking wholesale, but floating one certain baby in its cradle into security. The Raleigh picture has the pathetic interest of containing in one of the two most charming boys a portrait of the son whom Sir John Millais lost by death.

The year 1871 is another memorable year. Then appeared the picture which,

being unique, became the topic of London talk as "the Millais landscape." Of course, "Chill October" was something much more than the topic of talk. It is the finest example of literal landscape, the landscape of fact rather than of impression, which the literal English school has produced. It is a very just and complete scene, studied in all the quiet varieties of grey autumnal weather in their effects on sky, hill, wood, water, and a wonderfully painted foreground of rushes. In the same year appeared "Yes or No," and "Victory, O Lord."

"And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. . . . And Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun."—Exodus xvii. 11, 12.

For dignity, gravity, intensity of expression, and virility of action, Millais has never surpassed this magnificent group.

Next year came, with two more landscapes, and a little collection of single portraits, the bold and brilliant triad, "Hearts are Trumps." This picture of three sisters at whist was explicitly suggested by the immortal "Waldegraves" of Reynolds. One cannot make personal comparisons as to sitters in a portrait group, but it is certain that the modern painter was at a disadvantage in the matter of costume. His three ladies are clad in raiment as artificial, but



SIR J. E. MILLAIS' HOUSE: THE STAIRCASE.

by no means as dignified, as that of Sir Joshua's sitters. They wear too voluminous and too complicated dresses of pale grey, with bows and furbelows of pink—an insipid compound; and their hair is puffed and piled in the manner of 1872. The faces have an inimitable look of nature. Nature, rather than

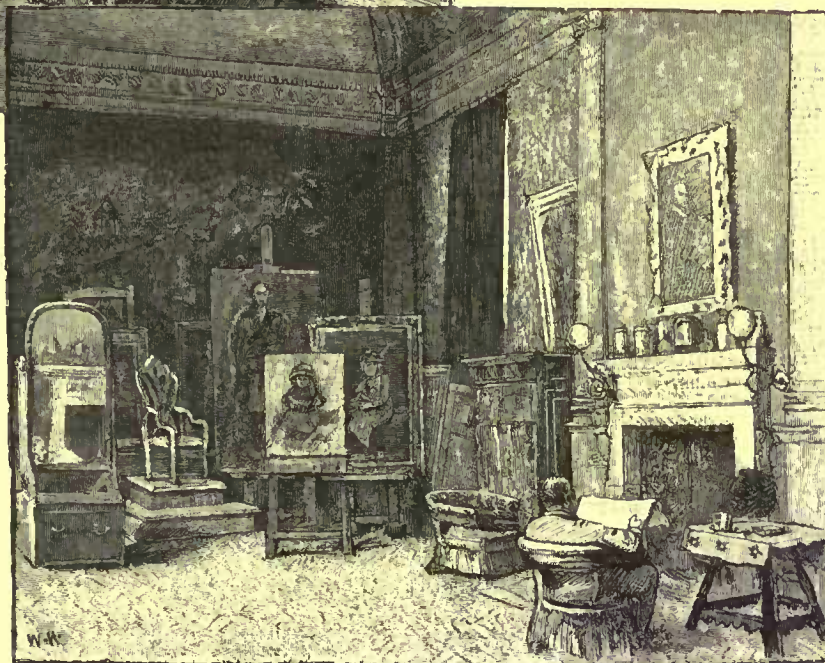
grace, has been taken for the inspiration of their pose. The whole is most vigorous in execution; but the greatest beauty of the picture lies in the effect of light on the lady in profile to the left. The light takes her hair, the surface of her complexion, the



THE FOUNTAIN.

folded and edges of her dress, in a marvellous manner; all the more marvellous as it is no strong effect of illumination, but an ordinary full, diffused daylight.

Mr. Walter Armstrong, who has classified with admirable system the groups of Millais' works according to the period, says of this time that from



THE STUDIO.

about 1870 onwards we find Millais devoting much less inventive effort to his subjects than in his earlier time. The slightest incident that gives a chance to make a picture of a pretty woman or child is enough. Of this, "Yes or No," "Forbidden Fruit," "New-laid Eggs," and "No," are samples. "Forbidden Fruit" and "New-laid Eggs" are idyllic portraits of two of his own children. Even the freshness of the English skin in youth is rendered. Portraits now increase

enormously, and, with landscapes, take up the place filled twenty years before by creations which, with all their charm, were now and then more poetic than pictorial. "The North-West Passage" is a portrait group; for, though the girl is, we believe, a professional model, she is treated in portrait manner; and in the splendid old salt we have a living likeness of Trelawney, the sea-hero who lighted Shelley's funeral pyre on the shore at Viareggio, and brought the poet's unconsumed heart from the flames, and who stood by the dead Byron at Missolonghi. A free-lance of the sea, a dweller in caverns, a kind of voluntary international outlaw, Trelawney kept throughout his life a devotion to Shelley, to his poetry, and to his memory, incongruous and touching in so wildly active a career. In his latter years he settled down to vegetarianism, grog, his telescope, and his recollections, at Worthing, a commonplace little harbour enough for the braver of many a tempest; and in this phase of his picturesque old age, with the trivial surroundings of a sea-side lodging, Millais made of him one of the finest pictures in the painter's later manner. It is almost to be regretted that the excessive reality of the lemon and the rum and the bunting should draw the eye from the old man's magnificent head. But, whatever Millais has abandoned of the rest of the Pre-Raphaelite creed, he has generally persisted in his early refusal to treat inanimate things as accessories. Witness the coverlet in the popular "Awake," which is more emphatically real than the flesh of the child.

In 1877 Millais painted another portrait subject, "The Yeoman of the Guard," better known as the "Beefeater," the beauties and difficulties of which he had long been eager to attack. To paint a mass of scarlet, not by evading it (as Gainsborough beautifully and subtly evaded his masses of blue in the "Blue Boy"), but by asserting it frankly, and to set in it the faded colours of an old man's flesh and white hair, was a thing worth doing, and so certain was the artist of his success, that he allowed his "Yeoman" to help to represent him at the Paris International of 1878, when M. Chesneau said of it:—"Gravely seated, the yeoman, whose breast glitters with a crowd of medals, looks as dignified as he can in the quaint, half-comic uniform of a 'beefeater,' one of those old-world dresses which survive only at Windsor and the Vatican. . . . Mr. Millais has rendered the unmitigated blaze of red with extraordinary effect. . . . The gold and dark blue of the belt and baldrick, the ruff, the buckskin gloves, the black hat, the brownish background, and the steel-blue of the halberds looking over the partition, all help the scarlet. The old man's face . . . is executed in a manner which seems clumsy beside the skilful manipulation of our French painters. But the execution, which at first sight appears wanting in firmness, shows, on close inspection, a knowledge of the tones of ancient flesh, and a power to reproduce them which may well amaze us." "The Ruling Passion," generally known as "The Ornithologist"—an important canvas—is a portrait group, rather unequal in realisation.

Among "subject" pictures of later years we have "Princes in the Tower," with its beautifully-drawn limbs of children; "The Crown of Love:" "Yes;"

"Effie Deans;" and "The Master of Ravenswood." Then come the subject portraits of pretty little girls, infinitely popular—"Sweetest Eyes were Ever Seen," "Cinderella," and "Caller Herrin'," all studied from the little daughter of the late Mr. Buckstone, the actor; with the "Cherry Ripe" and the other little maidens of our illustrated papers. As to portraits proper, Millais has painted a whole gallery, to the discontent of the public and the immeasurable gain of art. There are two at least of these—the first portrait of Mr. Gladstone (1879) and the portrait of Mr. Simon Fraser (1885), notably the latter, which every lover of great portraiture would place in an imaginary collection of the hundred noblest portraits produced in all the schools and all the ages of art. Millais is one of the few English painters who have been invited to contribute autograph portraits to the collection in the Uffizi, Florence.

In his early middle-life, or late youth, when Millais was not a recognised master, when men were divided in opinion as to whether he would ever achieve mastery, when increasing prosperity had placed him in Cromwell Place, but had not yet raised his pleasure-house in Palace Gate, Millais worked assiduously in black and white, doing enough and at sufficiently good prices to keep himself and his increasing family in independence, irrespective of the caprices of picture-dealers. All old volumes of *Once a Week*—a delightful little paper, long since declined, and rather lately dead—of the *Cornhill Magazine*, of *St. Paul's Magazine*, are full of his designs. He illustrated Trollope's profuse novels; his drawings are to be found in the illustrated collections of poems which were once popular as gift-books; and perhaps none of our painters have scattered their minor works about the country in such industrious abundance. In "Two Fair Maidens" we give a fair example of his slighter work on wood.

Building in the height of the "æsthetic" movement of some years ago, Sir John Millais yet built himself an artist's house into which æstheticism did not enter—no, not by so much as a peacock fan. Only a few feathers, if we mistake not, in a single vase of Oriental blue-green upon the drawing-room mantelpiece, serve to remind us of the peculiar flash and play of colour which most of us have learned to think so beautiful.

Thus the great red house at Palace Gate is above all things remarkable for absence of every kind of affectation. It is scarcely picturesque, though not an impossible house to put into a picture. It is stately and prosperous; and prosperity which is not obtrusive or self-assertive is in itself rather a beautiful thing than otherwise. The face of the house is to the west. At the back, as we shall find, stands out the enormous studio on the first floor, with its tall window northward—a conspicuous object from the Kensington High Road—and northward also looks part of a bow-window of the dining-room, its view sweeping up the broad walk of Kensington Gardens. The hall is of generous size and clear aspect; here as elsewhere beauty is obtained by excellence of materials rather than by any study of effects. The first flight of the broad stairs goes up straight, facing the door, the

Persian carpet covering them being soft and dark; and the scroll of cast-iron, supporting the polished black wooden rail, is of beautiful design. On either side of the brass inlaid fireplace in the hall stands a clever negro bust. The floor is of black, white, and yellow marble, arranged in a good and bold design; grey marble pillars support the ceiling; and a veined white marble dado, which recalls Genoa, runs round the hall and leads up the stone staircase to the first floor, where plays the fountain, spouting from the mouth of a black seal—the excellent work of Mr. Boehm, R.A. This fine study from nature is in a frank realistic style; the seal sits erect with fins drawn in and head in the air; his marble basin of clear water is lined with bright and beautiful shells. Tapestry covers the wall above, and several busts stand near.

From this pleasant resting-place lead the rooms of the first floor, the studio on one side, the drawing-room and the dining-room on the other. Nearly all the walls are of variegated whites—cream-white, ivory-white, milk-white. Those who are accustomed to this whiteness in a glowing climate know that nothing is more broad and picturesque than the effectiveness of a greenish or creamy-white wall in Italian sunshine and Italian shade, full of golden reflected lights, checkered with the fine shadows of Italian vines, and accentuated by dark Italian objects—a black *chevelure*, a brown face, or a huge indistinguishable old picture. But they may be incredulous of the beauty of a background of whitewash in England, where the grey lights of London days, and the sunshine at half power which is the greatest glow we ever receive in the fullest midsummer, would seem to require some surface less dependent upon the colours of the atmosphere. Nevertheless, Sir John's warm-white rooms have the great merit of making the most of what light there is for seeing purposes, nor will the eyes which most delight in the distinctively English tones of sage-green find fault with the whiteness here, where the surrounding objects are in no case suggestive of the quaint, tender, and shadowy colours of the last century.

The drawing-room is most interesting in the matter of pictures. Here hang the sketch for the noble picture of the "Boyhood of Raleigh;" a portrait of Millais by his fellow-Academician, Mr. Watts, whose portraits of painters form so valuable a contribution to the records of contemporary art; and a magnificent Holbein—the portrait of a dignified contemporary, with a full-toned colour, and capped and bearded with black. Pictures of the artist's daughters are also here, an oil sketch of Mrs. Langtry, and the great treasure of the house—a "Leda," attributed, and by authorities, to Michael Angelo. The name is too great a one to mention rashly, almost too great a one to hazard conjecturally at all; but where certainty is an impossibility, conjecture is permitted. Besides, no one can name the master to whose chisel this exquisite work could be due if that of Michael Angelo did not create it. Another treasure is an alto-rilievo in terra-cotta, attributed to John of Bologna; while of more modern interest are some sketches by Leech of the Duke of Wellington in 1851, a picture by Tito Conti, a basso-rilievo by



THE DRAWING-ROOM.

Marochetti—a portrait of Millais at the age of twenty—and the beginning of a sketch for his own “Eve of St. Agnes.”

After the pictures, the furniture of the rooms must have a word of description. A Bernard Palissy fish-dish may properly be classed under the decoration rather than the art. The finely-sculptured old marble mantelpieces (white also) have panels of brass let in at the inner sides (where tiles are usually placed) with excellent effect. The mirrors are French and Italian, and bright with gilding; and of the last century is an inlaid German cabinet having a great deal of beautiful workmanship, and six bolts to

its lock. A wooden trellis-work screen and some silver work are from Burmah. The curtains are of ruby velvet embroidered in crewels, the crewel-work being from the Castle of Kenilworth, and possibly from the hands of Amy Robsart. A brown parquet and large Indian rugs complete our notes of the more salient adornments of the stately double drawing-room. The “Leda” stands in a deeply-recessed alcove which projects (externally) over the front entrance, and connects the two parts of the drawing-room. Of the dining-room nothing need be said, save that it is quaintly and effectively decorated with a number of dark old-masterish pictures of game and fruit, cocks and hens and fish—*quadri di scuola*.

Of course the interest of the house centres in that great and famous studio

in which so many of the works of one among the very few living Englishmen who are worthy of the name of master have been created. It is a great, grand, massive, and lofty room, the Pompeian red walls of which are almost covered by Beauvais tapestry. Great oak pilasters rise to the ceiling on either side of the tall window and of the mantelpiece—a fine piece of old marble carving—above which hangs a Spanish portrait bearing proofs of Murillo's hand. Of Millais' own pictures which stand on the easels in the illustration, the foremost is "My Great Grandmother;" "Cinderella" is to the right, and the portrait of Lord Wimborne stands behind. The striking portrait of Mrs. Caird hangs in the recess to the right beyond the pilaster. At the time these pictures were in progress, the portrait of Lord Beaconsfield—two sittings advanced, and destined never to be finished—stood among the unframed canvases; also a first sketch of Sir Henry Thompson. Close by is a proof engraving after Millais' memorable portrait of Mr. Gladstone. For the rest, two old carved cabinets are full of exceptional interest—one (to the right in our drawing) being the cabinet introduced into the beautiful picture of "The Princess Elizabeth," and once part of the furniture of one of Charles I.'s houses; and the other a North German antique, the diploma work of a wood-carver executed in sign of his fitness for admission into a wood-carvers' guild.



AN ALCOVE IN THE DRAWING-ROOM.

The work is finely finished, and the whole structure is eminently valuable as an illustration of the self-respecting labour and art of the age of guilds. Trades-unions, by the way, are our modern equivalent for those societies. How would a trade-union bit of time-work look by the side of this North German cabinet?

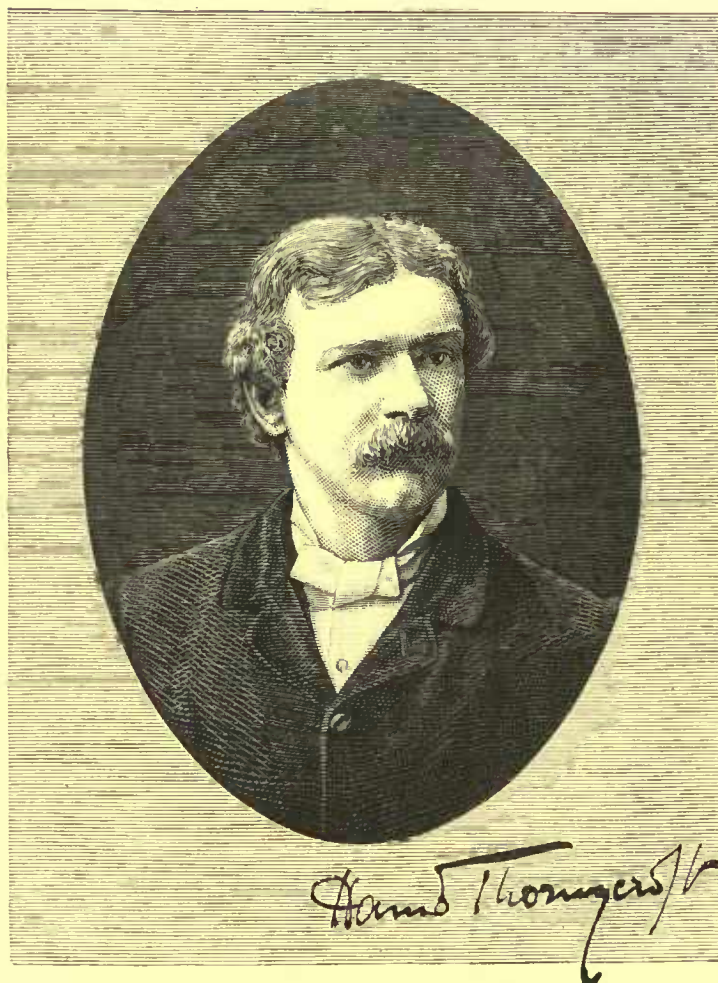
Below, on the ground-floor, and to the south side of the hall, opens the breakfast-room. Here the walls are quite covered with engravings and other things in black and white, such as the numerous diplomas given to the great English artist. First among these comes the Royal Academy diploma. The diploma given with the medal of honour at the Paris Exhibition of 1878 hangs below, and elsewhere are the Vienna award of 1873, and various other documents which must equally be fraught with pleasant memories to their possessor. The engravings are, however, the life of the room. With the exception of "The Strawberry Girl," Phillip's "Gloria," and a small work of Dante Rossetti's, the originals are all, or nearly all, Millais' own, and they illustrate his career almost completely. "The Carpenter's Shop" is here, and many a work of later date and manner—"The Black Brunswicker," "The Huguenot," and "The White Cockade;" "Ophelia," "Rosalind and Celia," "The Order of Release," "The Gambler's Wife;" "My First Sermon" and "My Second Sermon;" "Asleep" and "Awake," with "Still for a Moment" and "The Picture of Health;" while to somewhat later times belong the "Effie Deans and Geordie Robertson," "The Princes in the Tower," and the pathetic profile of a sempstress exhibited some time ago at the Grosvenor. The drawing by Rossetti deals with his patron poet Dante. On the first anniversary of his lady's death the young Florentine sat alone drawing an angel, when, looking round, he was surprised by the visit of some friends who had entered unawares, but whom he would, had he known of their coming, have greeted courteously; whereupon he told them that some one else had been with him. We have put the incident into clumsy English for lack of remembering the beautiful and simple words of Rossetti's own rendering from the Italian of Dante's autobiography. The little drawing of course illustrates the first fervours of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. The inscription records the poet-painter's gift of the drawing to his "P.R. brother, J. E. Millais." In those early days, Sir John reminds us, the young enthusiasts meant to hold together—and even to live together, for they had in contemplation an inscription for the door of the community, bearing the initials P.R.B. (Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood), which the Philistine public were free to interpret "please ring the bell," if they should be so minded.

Besides the engravings from Millais' pictures, there are reproductions of his admirable work in black and white—drawings for books and magazines, and in particular one of a group listening to the telling of a ghost story, which is full of dramatic expression. Over the mantelpiece in this same breakfast-room is the only painting which the apartment contains—a portrait of Lady Millais, frank and dignified in pose, with a dress of red velvet, and a magazine lying in the lap.

And this bright and substantial palace is distinctly a painter's home, and not

merely a painter's house. It has not been built in order that it might abide as a monument of taste, but chiefly that it might stand as the beautiful house of a household. It is not, therefore, altogether full of painting and of the interests connected with painting, for the other arts have their place, and the movements of Beethoven's sonatas come through the open doors into the grave silence of the studio. That an artist who has done so much for so many homes of others should be free to have for himself the very house of his heart and his fancy is so fitting that it is a pleasure, in a world of much prosaic injustice, to see poetical justice thus triumphant. An artist chiefly serves others; the picture which has been his secret for a little time, his hope for many days, and his companion, is destined to be the possession of strangers for ever after. If he attaches himself to his own thought and labour in his pictures, he must endure many pangs of parting. Some of those dear children of his he may never see again; of a few he may be too painfully aware that they have fallen into the hands of the Philistines; and of others that they are where an unsatisfactory light as well as an unsatisfactory eye is upon them. It is said that Sir John Millais himself would not be sorry if the chances of change should bring any number of his old works again within his reach. And if the master's pictures are the treasures of a hundred homes, the reproductions of his work have given interest to many thousands. So, as we have said, in return for all this diffused good and pleasure, he has won for himself the pleasure of following his own altogether unfettered choice in the building of his home.





(From a Photograph by Mr. Charles Watkins.)

HAMO THORNYCROFT, A.R.A.

FR. HAMO THORNYCROFT, who belongs to an old Cheshire family, was born in London on March 9th, 1850. He spent his childhood with an uncle and aunt in a very rustic and remote corner of Cheshire, left, it would seem, pretty free to grow stalwart in all manner of country exercises, and not much troubled with lessons till well on in boyhood. Lessons, however, sooner or later prove inevitable to the most muscular of amateur poachers, and the boy had at last to go to Macclesfield Grammar-school. In 1863 the exquisite fresh life in Cheshire had to be abandoned, and was succeeded by four years' hard work at University College School, London. After one year at the college itself, Mr. Thornycroft entered his father's studio, for, as is well known, both his parents were distinguished sculptors. In June, 1869, the young man was

admitted as a student to the Royal Academy Schools, became acquainted with Foley, attended the lectures of Weekes, and began to see something of the art of sculpture as it was practised twelve years ago. His progress at the schools was rapid and steady, and he looks upon himself to this day as a typical Academy student. To the question, "Whose pupil were you?" he answers, "The Royal Academy and the Elgin Room were my only masters." The gaining of the silver medal in the antique school, in December, 1870, was the first of many similar successes. It was in the Royal Academy exhibition of 1871 that he first came before the public, with a marble bust of the late Dr. Sharpey, Professor in Physiology in University College. In that year Mr. Thornycroft went to Italy, and he attributes a great modification of his aims in art to the study of Michael Angelo. In 1872 he was busy with the Park Lane fountain, in which the work was pretty well divided between his father and himself. The figures of "Comedy," a stiff and archaic statue such as a lad of genius is sure to produce, "Shakespeare," and the surmounting figure of "Fame" blowing a trumpet, were entirely devised and modelled by Mr. Hamo Thornycroft. The "Fame" was his principal contribution to the exhibition of 1873; it shows little indication of his future distinction of style. The bronze equestrian statuette of Lord Mayo in 1874 was far more remarkable, and indeed in every way a notable production for so young a man. The same year saw him gain the medal for drawing from the life, this honour being snatched for once from the painters, who were, let us hope, "*ravis d'être vaincus dans leur propre science.*"

It was in 1875, however, and still in competition with others, that Mr. Thornycroft first showed himself as an original power in his art. The Council of the Royal Academy gave as the theme for the biennial gold medal group the subject of "A Warrior Bearing a Wounded Youth from the Field of Battle." Mr. Thornycroft won, and at a canter; there was no possibility of hesitation, for among a variety of studies of an academic kind, meritorious but imitative, his alone had the character of a genuine conception by an original and competent workman. This group, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1876, became, in bronze, one of the standing prizes of the Art Union of London. It set the foundation to the sculptor's ascending fame. The warrior was represented as a grave and bearded personage in the prime of manhood, clothed as a Greek, with a crested helmet, and carrying, with straightened arms and balanced body, a nude youth, whose head falls upon his shoulder in helpless languor. The tension and muscular power of the elder figure were finely contrasted with the weakness and lassitude of the younger, and the sentiment of the whole group was singularly quiet, healthy, and severe, with no approach to affectation on the one hand or effeminacy on the other. The theme could hardly have been treated with more dignity or with a finer sentiment; and several points in the composition, though not at all obtruded, are soon detected, and show great study and a happy intuition. The only fault which criticism could suggest was that the youth seemed too large and solid to be carried so easily by a man scarcely taller than himself; but this was a fault, if a fault at all, on the right

side, since massiveness is of the first importance in sculpture. In an exhibition not otherwise up to the average of excellence, this group divided public attention with Mr. Woolner's bust of Tennyson and the "Duke of Wellington" of Alfred Stevens.

In 1877 Mr. Thornycroft was unrepresented at the Royal Academy, but in



HEAD OF LOT'S WIFE.

1878 he again attracted the attention of the critics by his marble statue, of heroic size, entitled "Lot's Wife." We give in our engraving the head of this figure, turned, as will be seen, so sharply over the left shoulder as to bring the muscles of the neck into high relief. The woman is of athletic mould, with shoulders unusually broad and square; and something almost barbaric, without being at all Oriental, distinguishes her mien and features. There is a certain exaggeration of type, excusable and natural in a young sculptor conscious of his powers and just



ARTEMIS.

fresh from the study of the Tomb of the Medici, and due, perhaps, to a conscious revolt against the smooth prettiness of the conventional female statue. She has snatched up her jewels in one hand, and, in the act of fleeing, turns back to catch one more glimpse of the cities of the plain. This momentary action is arrested, and, to suggest that she is being transformed into a pillar of salt, the sculptor has made all the lower part of the body columnar, and has clothed it in drapery that takes long fluted folds, almost like the decoration of a pillar. These folds become vaguer, softer, and more perpendicular as they approach the feet. The idea was imaginative, but the effect not perhaps entirely satisfactory. Where there may be discovered, perhaps, a failure, is in the insistence on the rather trivial phantasy of the figure's turning to actual salt, which has made the lower half of the statue monotonous and barely intelligible. The upper part of the figure, on the contrary, left nothing to be desired. The modelling of the bare left shoulder, of the right arm and hand clutching the jewels, and of the neck and throat, was superbly designed and carved, possibly in a more pronounced style than the taste of an older man would have dictated, but of almost unequalled interest as promising dignified and noble work in the future.

In the early months of 1879, Mr. Thornycroft exhibited in the South Kensington Museum, as afterwards at Burlington House, a singularly learned and original study for a memorial to the famous Dr. William Harvey, who, as Cowley said, "first trod the noble circle of the blood." In this statuette the sculptor aimed at representing the great doctor intent on the examination of a heart which lies on a table by his side, with note-book in hand about to write down the result of his investigation. He wears the gown of the doctor of medicine—the work-day gown, not the grand state robe—and has his cap on, which is a great advantage for an out-door statue. Harvey was thirty-eight years of age when he made his great discovery, and Mr. Thornycroft has attempted to represent him so, although the features are taken from portraits painted later in life. It is a great pity that this admirable work has never been carried out in monumental form. Mr. Thornycroft's marble group of 1879, called "Stepping Stones," a girl of about fourteen crossing a brook with her infant brother in her arms, was a disappointment to some of the sculptor's admirers, who feared that they saw in it a relaxed hold on the principles of plastic work, and an indifference to the finer ambitions of the artist. It was a little trivial and popular in conception, and seemed a retrograde step, taken after the "Lot's Wife." The sculptor, however, satisfactorily explains this, and justifies the instinct of his critics, by stating that this was quite an early work, exhibited so late only because he had then first received a commission to execute it in marble. Thus relegated back into its inventor's youth it takes much greater importance, and the side view is seen to possess many of the graceful and poetical qualities that mark his later compositions.

None, perhaps, even of the artist's admirers were quite prepared, however, for his great success of 1880. His statue of "Artemis" and his bronze statuette called

"Putting the Stone" caused something of the same surprise that a sturdy walker produces by suddenly becoming a fleet and graceful runner. The engraving we print of the "Artemis" will give some idea of the general pose and outline of this exquisite group. The attributes of the goddess are those which are universally connected with her as the sister of Phœbus Apollo. The bow is in her left hand, which, passing behind her back, is drawn close against her right hip by her hound, gone astray to the wrong side. She pauses in an attitude of arrested action, to take an arrow with the fingers of her right hand from a quiver slung across her shoulder. Her arms and the left breast are bare; her feet are unsandalled, as being divine and therefore unendangered by the thorns of the forest. The sculptor has given a most delicate and effective originality to the drapery by drawing the slight *chiton*—which is the only garment that Artemis wears—in thin folds over three girdles that are so concealed. In this arrangement of the robe, and in the uncovering of the breast, the statue recalls the mode in which the Greeks depicted the Amazons, and in particular Penthesilea, the victress of the victor Achilles. The dog has been much admired, and a little anecdote concerning it, which has been recorded in the *Century*, may be worth telling. The sculptor had arrived at the point when he wanted a hound as a model, and he could find none that suited him. On the very day when a dog was to have been finally fixed upon, there came to the studio door a very beautiful deer-hound, without any collar or mark of ownership, which seemed to have suffered much privation, and which absolutely refused to go away. The model was exactly what Mr. Thornycroft wanted, and while every effort was made to find the dog's master, the charming creature sat for her portrait. Nobody claimed her, and she became the pet of the household; but the effects of her long exposure brought on a decline, and, in spite of all the care that was taken of her, she died on the night of the day when the model was finished. A Greek would have said, with the utmost confidence, that the goddess had sent her, and when her work was done had taken her away again. The enthusiasm with which this work was greeted was greater than has welcomed any group in English sculpture for a long time, and soon after the opening of the exhibition the sculptor received a commission from the Duke of Westminster to execute it for Eaton Hall.

The success of the "Artemis" a little obscured the excellences of the bronze statuette, "A Youth Putting the Stone." The sculptor is himself a proficient in this game, which requires a rare combination of strength and knack. The spare, almost stringy figure of the young athlete was an admirable piece of workmanship, as masterly a study in the nude as Mr. Thornycroft has done. The artist talks of producing a series of small bronze statues, illustrative of English games, a series of which this will be the first. It is to be hoped that he will persevere in this intention, and make himself the Myron of our English gymnasiums. Such a series of statuettes would have a permanent value independent of their power of beauty as works of art, and might introduce a healthy variety into the somewhat hackneyed choice of subjects to which modern sculpture has hitherto confined itself.



TEUCER.

On the 20th of January, 1881, Mr. Thornycroft was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy, an honour which has seldom, if ever, fallen to the lot of so young a sculptor. His work for the ensuing exhibition was accordingly looked for with curiosity, and his principal production at the Academy was a statue of "Teucer," the typical Homeric bowman, entirely nude, and of heroic size. Teucer is represented in the act of supporting the army of Greece, which otherwise mainly consisted of spearmen, against the ranks of Troy. Secure behind the shield of his brother Ajax, Teucer aimed constantly at Hector, but in vain. Homer could not, however, permit his mighty archer to be stigmatised as a bad shot, and he therefore states that each shaft was directed by the gods to another Trojan heart, since Hector was not to be slain. Mr. Thornycroft has given to the face of his archer an expression of intense malice and of eager expectation. He has aimed once more at Hector, and his fingers scarcely relax as he bends slightly forward, retaining the tense curve of his figure, while he watches the flight of the arrow. The whole statue is tingling with vitality; strength, passion, intelligence, are all there in arrested action; and the warrior, unused to being thwarted in his purpose, can scarcely breathe until he sees that his vengeance is accomplished. The legs are drawn close together, and are still tense with the effort of resisting the opposite action of the arms, which are almost parallel to the ground. Nothing could be less conventional than this figure, which has something almost archaic about its severity and rigidity. This is perhaps the most courageously realistic work that Mr. Thornycroft has produced, but realistic without any loss of that distinction and that harmony of line which are the poetry of sculpture. The spectator is at first puzzled to say in what the singular appropriateness of the attitude consists; his eye soon convinces him that it lies in that firm tension of the whole figure, and that subtle bend from the head to the feet, in answer to the curved line of the bow.

Mr. Thornycroft's "Teucer," which is now in the public collection at South Kensington Museum, is a figure that has done more to restore the prestige of sculpture in England, and to give us hopes of a general revival of the art, than any which has been produced within the present generation. There has rarely been such unanimity of applause as greeted this statue, and we may be inclined to turn upon the sculptors who declare that the critics overlook their work, with the answer that when they produce such work as this there is no inclination to do them an injustice. Whether the "Teucer" is or is not, as has rather rashly been asserted, "the best imaginative statue ever exhibited at the Royal Academy," can hardly be decided without careful consideration of what Bacon and Flaxman may have exhibited before the memory of living generations; but it is very easy to admit that recent times have shown us nothing in England fit to compare with it. It will not be without interest, before we leave the "Teucer," to record the opinion pronounced on it by Millais. "The statue is whole," said the painter; "if it had been dug up in fragments, nations would be contending for possession of them."

The female head in high relief, half sobbing, half singing, to which is given



THE MOWER.

as a title Shelley's line, "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought," exhibited at the same time, attracted fewer observers, but to students of the artist's general work it is not less significant as an example of his favourite mood of imaginative impulse, held in, as it were, by a rein of realistic observation.

We have said nothing of the portrait busts, which form so important a part of the repertory of every modern sculptor. It seems to us that his success in this branch of his art depends very much on his personal sympathy with the type. Mr. Thornycroft has exhibited heads in which we find nothing that we do not find in the work of much less gifted contemporaries, and some in which he seems to rise suddenly to the highest level. An unnamed head of a beautiful woman, exhibited at the Dudley Gallery in 1880, and a bust showing the most sensitive perception of the beauty of intellectual old age—the portrait of Sir Arthur Cotton—are eminent examples of the second class. A face and figure full of their own firmness our sculptor put on record,

in his full-length posthumous statue of Lord Beaconsfield in 1882. The attitude is composed, but the repose is that of a pause in conversation, not of reverie or solitude. Lord Beaconsfield is in court dress, wearing the Ribbon of the Garter. The slender and by no means stalwart figure has a slight bend; the left hand is laid on the hip with an action that is at once light and rather weary—the action of an alert old man, who is yet conscious of a back slightly tired with standing; the other hand fingers the blue ribbon. The sculptor has accepted the difficulty of modern dress quite frankly, making his lines graceful and pure. The insuperable trouser-leg is of course not there; nor has any sculptor yet mastered *that*. A statue of Thomas Gray, the poet, for the Hall of Pembroke College, Cambridge, was among Mr. Thornycroft's subsequent works; also an equestrian statuette of Edward I., cast in wax—a material chosen by an English sculptor of another generation, Mr. Bell, in making his “Eve” for the International Exhibition of 1851.

Far more important—a landmark in Mr. Thornycroft's career—is “The Mower,” which followed. Leaving the Greek subject, the sculptor kept the Greek inspiration, which is evident in the artistic rendering of his English labourer, but which has not been permitted to alter or falsely to idealise a single form, line, or construction of the figure. It is a Greek conception of English fact, but the fact has not been in itself in the slightest degree affected. Such a subtle combination of an artist's truth to his culture with truth to his subject must be studied with delight wherever it occurs. The subject, indeed, is no ignoble one. The figure has, it is true, no grace of heroic proportion, or spring or poise. But it has such vigorous equilibrium, such strong construction, as satisfy the eye with harmony. The construction of parts is also so true and so characteristic that the whole man is felt to be an organism. Mr. Thornycroft has placed his mower in, or, rather, has let him swing himself into, an attitude admirably suggestive, in repose, of his occupation. The manner in which the legs are placed, taking that kind of habitual hold of the ground which lets the upper part of the body work free and wide, is especially true and significant. The action of the arms is also habitual, and harmonious with the figure and its occupation. To the face the sculptor has given a certain observant intelligence—very limited, however, not at all nimble or spirited. In one thing only has there been a kind of idealisation, a most excusable exaggeration of the undress which an English hay-maker allows himself in the dog-days. Nowhere, except in America, where the farm-labourer follows the plough in an old dress-coat, does the artist get so little of the joy of seeing the figure in action as in England. However wretchedly our people are clad—thinly in the cold, heavily in the heat, frowsily and stately and ungracefully always, they are always at least covered up. The artist, therefore, who can see the long-waisted Tuscan and the light-limbed Oriental moving at his labour, has no such opportunity with the Englishman; he must get English action in the simulation of the studio, and English carnations in the unwholesome whiteness of unwonted undressing. In this way modern conditions make

for one of the characteristic faults of modern art—disregard of the characteristics, national and other, of the figure, as though the face were all. But in fact there is no part of the body which has not its inherited character of race, its significant expression. When a peasant who has never worn shoes grows excited in his talk, his toes become as mobile as his hands. And while all this kind of natural truth is lost in England, it is no wonder that sculpture is neglected. It has become with us an art that must be practised with an effort, as must the art of acting among a people which has no habit of gesticulation.

After the "Mower" came the charming figure of the "Sower Scattering Seed." Here the sculptor has allowed himself more apparent beauty and grace, both of type and of garb, than in the statue of his English field-hand. The sower has a beautiful freedom of movement and poise of attitude—all natural, exquisitely easy, with no touch of conventionality or trivial grace. Nor, indeed, in the whole course of Mr. Thornycroft's work has he ever been tempted to what the French call a *banalité*. Here, as usual, we find the inimitable grace of unconscious nature, real labour, the impulse of simplicity. This is the virile grace which no decadent school of art has ever understood. The attitudes—poor platitudes of action as they are—dear to the later Italian painters, are examples of the *other* kind of elegance. The parts of this fine figure, all the constructions, the muscles and articulations, the perfectly finished and fine joints, have been completely studied. All is as learned as it is beautiful. It is much to be wished that the thickness of the leggings or gaiters had been so modified that the tapering of the left leg had not been lost. In our view of the statue, the lightness and spring of the figure are marred by the size of this ankle.

A word as to Mr. Thornycroft's mother is not out of place here. Her name was a famous one in the middle of the century as that of the only Englishwoman who had ever attained eminence in the art of sculpture. That singular position she has kept, and is not the one celebrated sculptress in the world, only because Miss Hosmer has rivalled her in her later years. Born in 1814, Mrs. Thornycroft's earlier years were spent in days when the opening of professions to women was unheard of. But her father, Mr. John Francis, himself a sculptor, took a liberal view of his little daughter's promise and taste, and allowed her first to play at work, and afterwards to work in earnest in his studio. Fittingly enough, the first bust she exhibited when she was still in her teens, was a bust of her father. Next came a "Flower Girl," which won considerable attention; and when the young sculptress married Mr. Thomas Thornycroft, himself a sculptor, and her father's pupil, and went to Rome, her art-surroundings became so complete that her work and study grew more serious. To her friendship with Gibson, in Rome, she owed the quick and fortunate opportunity of celebrity. He so much admired her "Sappho" and "Sleeping Child" that when the Queen applied to him to name a good artist to model her children, he recommended the charming and sympathetic work of the English lady. In the first of the International Exhibitions, 1851, Mrs.

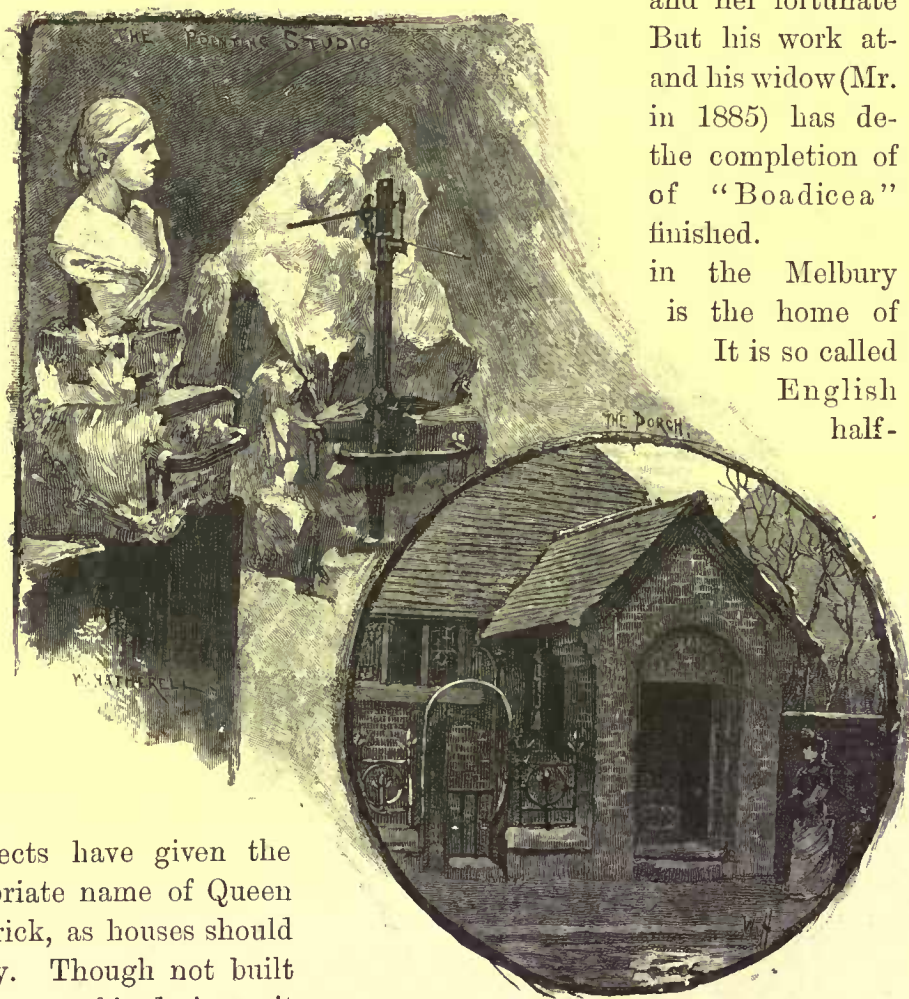


"THE SOWER SCATTERING SEED."

Thornycroft exhibited, if we mistake not, one or two of the perfectly childlike and pleasing statues of the Queen's little children. The four eldest she treated very successfully in a group of the Four Seasons; and she modelled, moreover, busts of the Queen herself, the Duchess of Kent, and the Duchess of Gloucester, also of all the Princesses before marriage, except the Princess Beatrice, who was modelled by her sister, Princess Louise. To Mrs. Thornycroft also have been entrusted the portraits in marble of the younger generation of the family. Thus Royal commissions have showered upon her. With children she has been especially successful. In 1855 her pretty "Skipping Girl" won golden opinions in Paris. One of her principal works consists of the monument of Baroness Braye in Stamford Church, Leicestershire—a recumbent figure, with a relief of angels. Mr. Thomas Thornycroft's name was doubtless the less prominent because his wife's was made famous by her unique position, and quick success. tests his talent; Thornycroft died voted herself to the colossal group which he left un-

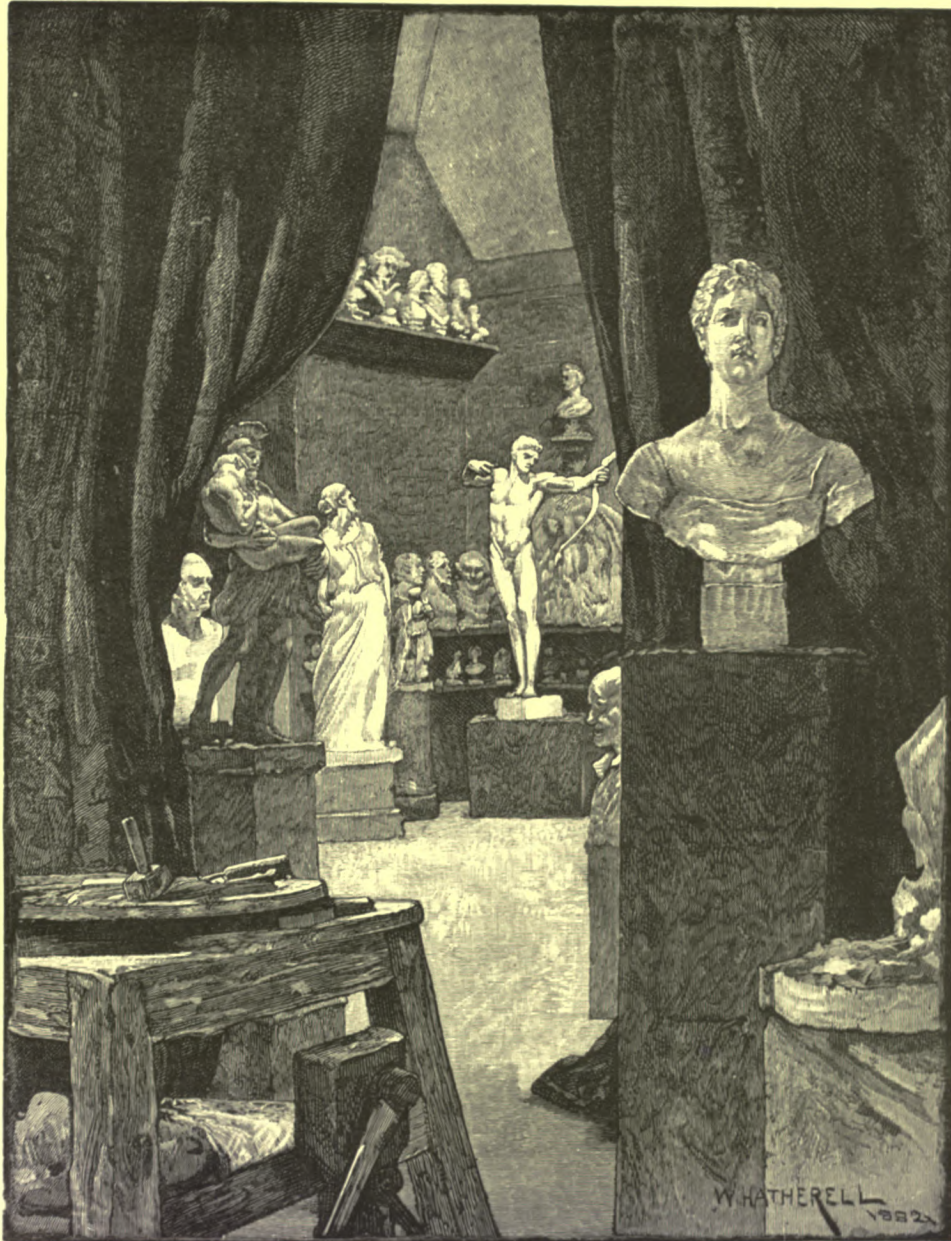
Moreton House, Road, Kensington, the Thornycrofts. after a fine old black-and-white timbered house, built in the best taste of its period, now crumbling to decay, in a remote corner of Cheshire, once the ancestral home of the family. It is built in that later Victorian style

to which our architects have given the not altogether appropriate name of Queen Anne. It is of red brick, as houses should be under a murky sky. Though not built wholly from Mr. Thornycroft's designs, it has yet been controlled by his taste, and of the entrance porch he is specially proud, since this is entirely his own device. He was delighted when Mr. Waterhouse, the architect, admired its idea and proportions.



MR. THORNYCROFT'S HOUSE: THE PAINTING STUDIO—THE PORCH.

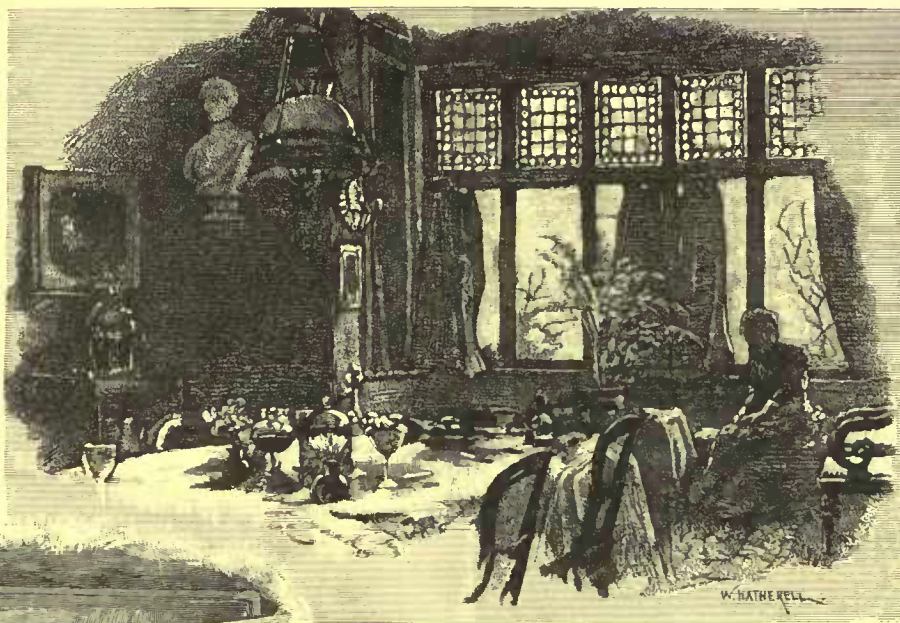
A second door admits into the dwelling and into a narrow vestibule that runs alongside the house, of which the low leaded windows are seen in our vignette. At the



THE LARGE STUDIO.

further end west stands an equestrian statuette of the Queen, the work of the elder Thornycroft. It is from this corner that we obtain that charming peep of the inner hall and the staircase which our artist has depicted in another sketch. Very happily do lines and curves blend; very pleasantly to the eye do the subdued tints of hangings combine with the dark polish of the wooden stairs, the red

tiling of the floor, the *bric-à-brac*, the photographs and engravings that line the walls; while beyond, giving grace, colour, and, as it were, the benediction of nature to the whole, are the green trees of the garden, seen through the leaded window at the base. From this hall open out the drawing-room and dining-room on the left, the gallery on the left, the gallery on the right. But ere we explore these



THE DINING-ROOM.



THE STAIRCASE.

rooms let us hasten to the studio, where presides the master-spirit.

Mr. Thornycroft's studio, or rather studios, are an annex to the house, connected with it by a pretty, narrow little conservatory, gay with flowers, forming an appropriate entrance to a sanctuary of art. The first room we enter hence is rather a depository of plaster copies of some of the various artworks of the family. Here stand not only Mr. Hamo Thornycroft's "Shakespeare," designed for the Park Lane fountain, his gold medal group of a "Warrior Bearing a Wounded Youth from the Field of Battle," his many portrait busts

of varied merit, but also works by his father, whose pupil he has been, and by his gifted mother. There is no attempt at elegance of arrangement. The room and one adjoining it are used for the rougher work, of which there is so much in the

sculptor's art. Here is done the pointing, as it is called: the marking out with mathematical accuracy upon the marble the points that shall guide the workman, whose labour it is to block out in the rough from the formless marble what may be called the potentiality of a statue, its rude semblance, to which it is reserved to the sculptor's hand to give form, finish, and life. In our vignette we see the plaster bust from which the workman works the shapeless marble, the nicely accurate instrument by which the measurements are taken, and the punctures made upon the block.

The next room, separated from this by only a wooden partition, is called the large studio, and is that in which Mr. Thornycroft's assistants work. The brick walls are tinted a warm Pompeian red, and a curtain, hung transversely across the length of the room, adds to



THE INNER STUDIO.

the impression of colour. Here the artist's small clay sketches are enlarged to the size the statue shall ultimately assume; here they can be seen full size, alive with all the soft, tender sinuosities that make the clay medium so truly, as Thorwaldsen expressed it, the life of the statue, of which the plaster cast is the death, the marble the resurrection. Here stands the strange framework on which the statue is built up, with its hanging chains that will ultimately be enclosed in clay and form the arms and legs; its leaden pipes that will support the head and shoulders; the iron support, resembling a gas-pipe rather than an

artistic utensil, that will form its prop. Large doors open out from the studio towards the garden, and lead on to a paved platform that juts right out into the greenery. On to this platform Mr. Thornycroft loves to bring his work, and even in the garden itself many of his statues are first made. This is another respect in which he is perhaps unique, yet another evidence of his healthful mind. He knows that sculpture is essentially an outdoor art—that only our English climatic conditions have forced it to seek shelter under roofs; and by taking out his work into the open he fictitiously creates for himself a sort of Greek feeling. He does not see it under



THE SCULPTURE GALLERY.

the artificial effects of light and shade that must haunt even the best built studio. Here no doubt is the key to the quiet, vigorous character of Mr. Thornycroft's work. He is fortunate in having a garden to work in; and the neatness with which it is tended, the kindness with which the flowers grow in it, the miraculous absence of smutty trees and plants, would lead you to believe yourself miles distant from the grimmest city of the universe. Mr. Thornycroft loves the open air, as he loves sports and athletic exercises.

From this large studio we enter Mr. Thornycroft's sanctum. It is spacious—thirty-five feet in length—and the sloping roof is high; but being somewhat full it scarcely gives the idea of its size. Here, too, the walls are tinted the same Pompeian red. But the principal first impression is that here the workshop element has been

minimised until it may be said to be eliminated. Mr. Thornycroft says that he does not like the room in which the greater part of his life is spent to be comfortless. The very water-pot that holds the brush with which the sculptor must sprinkle his clay to keep it moist, is enclosed in a brass pot of quaint design, being, in fact, a Breton milk-pail. It is seen in our sketch, on the rug beside the modelling-stand, which is surmounted by the clay sketch of a monument to a dead father and son to be erected in Liverpool for the widowed mother. Culture, true culture, not its teacup semblance, pervades the very air of the room. For while paintings, sketches, photographs line the walls, a piano occupies the place of honour, and a violoncello rests against the jamb. Then there is a bookcase, and books are carelessly strewn around—sure tokens that they are kept to be read, not merely looked at. And examining them we shall see that poetry, and poetry of the best and highest kind, predominates. Upon the floor is spread a matting, with here and there an Oriental rug, forming patches of pleasant colour, another notable feature in Mr. Thornycroft, and rare in a sculptor, being his fine eye for colour. The quaint fireplace, designed by the artist, encloses a hearth with Early English dogs. And as is fitting, and as it has been since all ages, that the hearthstone be the guardian of whatever is sacred to the house-owner, so here Mr. Thornycroft has accumulated his Penates. On each side the lintel hang photographs of portions of the Elgin marbles, which Mr. Thornycroft recognises as his chief masters in his art; while over the centre is a cast of one of the tigers in Professor Hallmél's "Bacchic Procession," so unfortunately destroyed in the fire that consumed the Dresden Theatre. Over the fireplace itself are Mr. Thornycroft's favourite antiques, which he places here, as he expresses it, to keep his eyes fresh, and which enable him, when he lifts them from his work, "to see how bad it is." It is the period of the Elgin marbles, the highest type of Greek art, that Mr. Thornycroft loves best; and it is characteristic of his sense, his taste, his freedom from conventionality, that the specimens he has chosen to be his Penates are not those that one would, perhaps, look to see upon his fireplace. True, a large photograph of the Venus of Milo surmounts the whole altar, as it may be justly called; but then it would, indeed, be rank heresy in any artist to exclude from his work-room the dearest of the antiques. Beneath the Aphrodite stands a copy of the fine dignified bust known as the Oxford Fragment, probably a Demeter. And truly it is fitting that the Earth Mother should preside over the hearthstone of one of her healthy sons. On her one hand is a torso of the Cyrenian Aphrodite, on the other the so-called "Hera" of Kensington, with her placid, archaic, curiously thoughtful beauty. The other busts and statuettes all testify to the sculptor's sympathy with early Greek art.

The many busts and statues that adorn the room are from Mr. Thornycroft's own hand. Here we see a bronze cast of the original wax sketch of his "Teucer," as well as a full-sized bust. Here, too, are the masterly little bronze of an "Athlete Putting a Stone," and the standing statue of Lord Beaconsfield. Portrait busts, too, abound in his studio, in too many cases the mere "pot-boilers" of his profession.

The studio is lighted by a high lancet window, over which, in our sketch, a blind is drawn. Mr. Thornycroft can, when he desires, also light the room from above. The unique feature of his studio, and one of which he is specially proud, is that the wall does not come down flush with the window, but that beyond he has built for himself an alcove or low outer room, which presents the unspeakable advantage that, while he can get his work near to the light, he can himself, by retreating into this outer room, get at a distance from his object, and so have a good perspective whence to judge it. The alcove is connected with the studio by a curtain, and opens out on to the garden. On fine days the door stands open, and a luscious background of greenery is presented to the eye, refreshing and resting, and combining very gratefully with the white of the sculptures, making them look less *dénaturées* than at the best they are apt to do in London. The alcove itself is a delicious little snugger, used by Mr. Thornycroft as his writing-room: full of sketches and books, and those silent evidences of culture which the cultured eye is so quick to detect, so grateful to perceive. Stepping out from it into the garden, we see that above its low roof is built a balcony, on which on warm evenings Mr. Thornycroft loves to sit reading or sketching in wax. Beneath, just above the door to the garden, runs a frieze, or what has become a frieze, for it was merely a coved cornice of cement which Mr. Thornycroft chose to decorate. While the cement was wet he sketched in a charming little frieze, representing the story of the making of a statue. On the extreme left the sculptor gazes ardently into the fire, whence he draws his first inspiration; then, seated at the piano, under the sweet strains of music he matures it, while the outline of the moon shows that this is night, the time for meditation. The uprising of the sun tells of the dawn of a new day in which the statue passes from the realms of fancy to those of reality. The clay sketch is made, the frame constructed, on which the clay is put; here is the model sitting, here the casting in plaster, the quarry where the marble is hewn, and finally the carving of the work out of the nobler material. All the instruments used in the sculptor's profession are indicated—the modelling tool, the callipers, the spatula, the point, the gradine, even down to the very screw-jack. Turning the corner, we come upon the sculptor, his work done, enjoying his recreation: hunting the deer, shooting, fishing, playing lawn tennis, evoking sounds from his violin.

Re-entering the conservatory, we pass into what is called the gallery for finished work, next to Mr. Thornycroft's private studio the most attractive room in the house. It is a striking illustration of the air of refinement imparted to a room by the presence and judicious arrangement of sculpture. Here the place of honour is given to music, in the shape of a grand piano, and piles of music books lie around; for here it is that the Thornycrofts assemble of an evening to seek refreshment and inspiration from the sister art. Here, amid plants and flowers, stand some of Mr. Hamo Thornycroft's finest works, some in plaster, some in marble: among the former his "Artemis," seen in our sketch; among the latter his "Lot's Wife."

Since he finishes most of his sculpture himself, his marble work is particularly individual. Through the open folding-doors of the gallery we look into a family sitting-room, chiefly furnished with Mrs. Thornycroft's sculpture, while a door at the other end conducts us once more into the hall.

Crossing this we enter a cheerful drawing-room, cool and low in colour. A notable feature is the fireplace, the tiles that surround the grate being painted with portraits of the whole family by Miss Helen Thornycroft. The dining-room has not this unused air, since man, even artistic man, must eat. A warm-coloured pleasant room it is, with its long bay window and lead lightings, through which in the evening are seen the red rays of some of those lovely sunsets for which London is famous. Here hangs Mr. T. Blake Wirgman's finely-conceived portrait of Mrs. Thornycroft, representing her as in the act of modelling a clay statue, the modelling tool in her fingers.

But after we have seen all in detail, what chiefly strikes us and clings in our memory about Mr. Thornycroft's house is its true artistic beauty and the absence of modern artistic affectation. Every object seems to fall naturally into its place, not to have been put there as the result of much study from the desire to be peculiar and unique. And it is this that makes it, what even the finest houses should be, essentially a dwelling-house, not a mere repository of beautiful things where comfort and homelikeness is the last point to be regarded.





*In Faithfully
J. C. Hook.*

(From a Portrait by Messrs. Elliott and Fry.)

JAMES CLARKE HOOK, R.A.

ARTIST, farmer, and fisherman—these three words describe the subject of this sketch. A public cultivated enough to recognise the honesty, intensity, and thoroughness of Mr. Hook's work with his brush will not need to be told that the same qualities are displayed by him in every other pursuit of his life. It will readily credit him with being able to guide a plough, wield flail, axe, sickle, or scythe, haul on to a rope, shoot a net, take a turn at the tiller, or pull an oar, much as if his duties in life had led him to do these things and nothing else. That he is a good seaman, and knows all about fish, whether from the fresh or salt water, as well as how to catch them, there can be no doubt. A man who paints fish, flesh, and fowl,

earth, sea, and sky, as he does, must be naturalist, botanist, geologist, sailor, and much beside. Touching further upon the practical side of his character, one might guess that he would be a competent architect, engineer, shipwright, and carpenter, and that there is scarcely a tool belonging to any handicraft, of the trick of which he has not an inkling. There is evidence of all these facts in what he paints, and in the way he paints. The poetic element of his nature is shown, too, by his intense appreciation of the open, and the humanity which he puts into his vivid presentments of the rough and honest folk who live and breathe upon his canvases. They are no mere studio models, they are the people themselves.

It is needless to say that a triumph of power like this has not been the



HOME WITH THE TIDE.

creation of a day, for as far back as the year 1839 we find Mr. Hook's name in the Academy catalogue. Unlike many lads with a natural bent towards art, he met with no opposition from his relatives in his choice of a career, although none of them in any way had shown a like predilection. His mother was the second daughter of Dr. Adam Clarke, the Biblical commentator, and his father—a member of a Northumbrian family—was one of the judges of the Mixed Commission Court of Sierra Leone. He, being a man of refined taste, encouraged his son to cultivate the marked love he had for drawing, and when young Hook left the North Islington Proprietary School, he studied at the British Museum until he was admitted a student at the Royal Academy in 1836.

Then only seventeen (for he was born in London, November 21, 1819), he made such good use of his natural powers and of the curriculum of the Academy,

that he succeeded in carrying off most of its medals and prizes. After exhibiting his first picture, "The Hard Task," in 1839, he did not appear again in the catalogue till 1842, when, besides winning the first medals in the life and painting schools, he exhibited a portrait. The series of Italian pictures, by which he gained his early honours, was commenced in 1844, with a subject from the "Decameron;" and in 1845 he won the gold medal of the Academy for the best original historical picture, the theme given being the "Finding of the Body of Harold." By his "Rizpah Watching the Bodies of the Sons of Saul" he secured the travelling studentship, and in 1846 went to Italy.

Mr. Hook was emancipated from Academy subjects, but he inevitably fell into bondage to romantic Italy. At that date real Italy had manifestly not been discovered. There she was, indeed, in all her own wilful, inexplicable, workaday charm; but the painters did not see her. What they saw was the ready-made Italy of costume and cavaliers, or of scenic citizens and a dramatic clergy, the Italy which they took with them from England, which they kept with them there in a persistent protest against the facts, and which they brought triumphantly home again on canvas. To many of them Venice was principally the scene of Shakespeare's play. To more (and this applies not to artists only but to all the wandering English) Venice was the city on which Byron made certain stanzas, and on the shores of whose Lido he used to ride unwonted horses in that "conspicuous solitude" (as Mr. Howells has it) which was dear to his heart. Who will candidly say that Turner's Venice is the city indeed in her habit as she lives? Mr. Hook was a young man, and if we may judge of his Venetian work by the titles of the pictures which are recorded, we may suppose that he did what a young man often does best—followed his leaders. The days of his own "line" were yet distant. Between 1847 and 1853 we hear of "Bassanio Commenting on the Caskets," and "The Defeat of Shylock." Moreover, his Italian sojourn produced "The Chevalier Bayard Wounded at Brescia." It is curious to find such subjects in the record of a painter who, when once he discovered the blue seas and green shores of his own country—discovered them as really his own—stuck to them with a pertinacity hardly ever equalled. But all the preliminaries of a successful career are in one way or in another effectual. Even time apparently lost enters into the eternal records of experience; but Mr. Hook's tentative time was not lost. All his labour as a student, every stroke with the brush, helped in the education of a marked and original talent. Nor can any fine artist dispense with the study of great achievement, even when it is foreign to his own final aims in art. Thus the painter of English nature—landscape and sea—was rightly occupied with dwelling on the Venetian treatment of the figure; the positive, unluxurious colourist of the future was doing well in meditating the tints of Titian; the painter who was to devote himself to the fisher-people of England to-day was by no means wasting time in admiring the saints of Carpaccio. Mind and hand—the hand almost always, the mind always—must profit by an artist's love for even the kind of beauty which he renounces.

As he was elected an Associate in 1850, no doubt could exist that the travelling studentship had been bestowed upon the right man, notwithstanding that his Italian pictures, admirable as they were, failed to establish him at his proper value in the eye of the general public. It was not until 1854 that Mr. Hook struck into the path which was to lead him to fame. That year saw the first of what may be called his English pastorals, and in "A Rest by the Wayside" all the world recognised the stamp of original genius. Not quite abandoning yet, however, the sort of theme which he had hitherto treated, the artist gave us, in 1855, in conjunction with the "Birthplace of the Streamlet," a picture entitled "The Gratitude of the Mother of Moses," the last, probably, he painted with his old feeling. Such titles as "The Bramble in the Way," "A Passing Cloud," "Welcome, Bonny Boat!" are sufficient to record how, in 1856, he devoted all his energies to his newly-found line.

How much more fully this was developed the following year, any one will recognise who can remember that most pathetic work, "A Widow's Son Going to Sea," and the graphic representation of a group of Clovelly fisher-folk, men, women, and children, looking out to sea, and called "A Signal on the Horizon." These two coast subjects found their proper context in the inland scene of the "Ship-boy's Letter," where John Dibble listens, as he is hedging and ditching, to his wife's reading of the missive just received from the walking postman. "The Coast Boy Gathering Eggs" was the next great hit of our painter; and it is doubtful if, in many respects, he has ever surpassed his triumph of 1858, at least in a popular sense. For to artistic quality he united a dramatic incident of a kind to excite public fancy keenly. Few who have regard to these matters can forget the lad suspended by a rope over the face of one of the most precipitous of the Lundy Island cliffs. It will be remembered how, hanging in mid-air, in a fashion that makes one's blood creep, his naked feet seeming to be feeling for a foothold, he gathers his spoil into a net, which he holds



FROM UNDER THE SEA.

(By Permission of Mr. C. P. Matthews.)

at the end of a pole. The scared and angry gulls, that "wing the midway air," swoop with widespread pinions around him, whilst at a giddy depth below lies the sea, with its fringe of foam fretting against the cliff's base. In 1859, "Luff, Boy!" came, the picture which evoked from Mr. Ruskin, in the "Academy Notes," that he then published annually, the words, "Thank you heartily, Mr. Hook!" "The River," one of his most suggestive and beautiful inland subjects, the "Skipper Ashore," and "A Cornish Gift" were also of that same season. The following year the full honours of the Academy were conferred on our painter, who immediately more than justified his election by "Whose Bread is on the Waters," "Oh, well for the Sailor Lad!" and "Stand Clear!"

Popular opinion was altogether with the Royal Academy in their choice of a



"JOLLY AS A SAND-BOY."

new member. The public had made fast friends with Mr. Hook from the day when his individuality first made itself evident. Perhaps no painter of our day has had less to suffer from popular ignorance or indifference, or from Press criticism, or from the doubt or disapproval of brother painters. Every one has always understood him sympathetically—agreeing with him as to the value of what he aimed at doing, and enjoying his manner of compassing his end. Blue seas, with a fringe of foam, sturdy effects of weather, children with hair bleached and faces tanned by the sea-winds, will always give the average Englishman the moderate pleasure which he best enjoys; and the rendering of these things without any artistic mystery, without any display of purely painter-like ways of seeing that make calls upon the layman's understanding, has doubtless enhanced the pleasantness for the public. Pleasant also for the public to find that it is right, that its guides agree with it—that, in short, it is not making one of the big mistakes in the records of artistic popularities.



CRABBERS.

Nor has the sameness of Mr. Hook's subjects ever wearied his admirers. He gives them what they expect, and there would be a sensible disappointment at any marked novelty, at any great change of climate even, or at too much shifting of the scene. Nor do they require from him the sentiment or the story-telling which might be exacted from another favourite. Mr. Hook has not very often indulged his public with even an allusion to the tragedies of fisher life. He has contented himself with the cheerful events of every day as they occur among the unexcitable and undemonstrative populations of our coasts. And in this he has undoubtedly understood his own power perfectly. Pictures he has enjoyed in the painting have been thoroughly enjoyed in the seeing, because the painter has been so uniformly true to his own genial artistic personality.

To name Mr. Hook's pictures would occupy pages; but it may be said that every one showed that he was advancing on the road he had chosen. A few milestones, however, must be noted in his wanderings through Devon and Cornwall to Scilly, such as "Compassed by the Inviolable Sea," "The Trawlers," and "From Under the Sea." Brittany for the next two years became the land of the painter's love, and his increasing power was shown in "Breton Fishermen's Wives," "The Mackerel Take," and "The Sardine Fleet." Harking north after this, he produced "The Herring Fishery," on the coast of Banff, and the incidents belonging thereto, such as "Fishers Clearing their Nets" and "Mother Carey's Chickens." "The Lobster Catcher," "The Morning After a Gale," and a host of other sea and landscape subjects, including "A Cowherd's Mischief" and "Cottagers Making Cider," impossible to catalogue here, bring us to 1870, when Holland opened up fresh ground for our indefatigable artist. The low flat land of flush grey rivers and red-roofed towns, of windmills and large skies, has become a favourite painting-field with our English artists, and Mr. Hook was among the first to take his sketch-book there. A taste for quaintness, which developed strongly in England at the time of the incorrectly named "Queen Anne" revival, helped the charm of Holland, and set many a palette with her ruddy and pearly tints. One of Mr. Hook's principal Dutch pictures in its very title delightfully described the country—"Brimming Holland." "Fish from the Doggerbank" is another work of this time. A trip to Norway was also productive of fresh, vigorous, and characteristic pictures. Treating of England again in 1872, the artist produced "Gold from the Sea," and one of his gayest subjects, "Jolly as a Sand-boy." Every one should be grateful to him for giving to a cheerful but meaningless proverbial saying so perfectly satisfactory and exhilarating an elucidation. If Mr. Hook's sand-boys had not illustrated the proverb, they should have originated it, and been the sand-boys of all time.

In 1875 the subject of one picture was again Dutch, "The Land of Cuyp." It was that master's land, indeed, but it was the English painter's hand, and curious are both similarity and difference. The hour is milking-time, and the place a stretch of water and pastures. A man and a girl are at their task with the long, narrow-necked brass vessels of the country. In the same Academy appeared "Hearts

of Oak," of which the scene is far more familiar—a rock-bound coast with foam-edged waves, and a sailor with his wife and child, brown and strong, sitting on the shore. Also "The Samphire Gatherer," a girl plying the dizzy labour on steep cliffs that overhang a deep-toned sea. "Crabbers" appeared, with other canvases, in 1876. It has what the artist does not often aim at—movement and strenuous action. It takes an important place by its vigour as well as by its size. In the following year Mr. Hook's fisher-folk were children again, wandering, and at sport. "Word from the Missing" show them picking up a sealed message from the sea; and "A Gull-Catcher" presents the stormy pursuits of a strong little sailor-lad who is capturing a sea-gull with a line on the windy shore. "He Shot a Fine Shoot" deals with a calm autumnal day inland, with deep green fields and quiet farms, the title representing the cheerful local comment on a good bag displayed in the foreground. Soon after came a most unwonted change to "The Coral-Fisher, Amalfi," of which the composition is very pleasing; but Mr. Hook was speedily welcomed back to "Mushroom Gatherers," a girl and boy on the English sea-coast, the best of his works in 1879, when he exhibited also a bit of good local industry, "Tarring Nets." Next we have another charming bit of fisher-child life, mischievously called "The Nearest Way to School." The nearest way takes the brown-cheeked urchins irresistibly to the sea-shore, with its always fresh delights. In 1882, also, the artist was at his best and his most familiar with "Castle-Building," the mouth of an estuary at low tide, old boats, and children playing the game that will last as long as man and the sea; and with a "Devon Harvest Cart" and "Caller Herrin'," in which a basket of fish is painted with wonderful power.

Later comes "After Dinner Rest Awhile," which shows a bird—"the hote cormeraunt ful of glotony"—reposing in the gloomy gravity of digestion. Mr. Hook has produced, by the way, other admirable birds; for example, the crow in "Wise Saws," which we have not been able precisely to date, but which belongs to about 1875—a pastoral green landscape rich with grass. "The Close of Day" (1885) with its sunset—

"The weary sun hath made a golden set"—

is a not common instance of Mr. Hook's choosing the mellower light of evenings or low suns, instead of the full effects of day. To the same year belong "Yo, Heave Ho!" a subject of action, and "The Stream."

In giving a slight description of these few in an enormous record, we have necessarily dwelt upon the figures, because their little actions are chiefly describable. But the figures are almost always accessories, the subjects of the pictures are not in *them*. The subject lies in coast and sky and sea, in cloud and wave, in rock and seaweed, in the greensward of seaside downs, and the hardy growth of cliff-top flowers, in the salt-eaten colours of old boats and the rust of old tackle, in the wind coming from indistinct horizons, and the white flecks of breakers.



*Your faithfully
J. H. Boughton*

G. H. BOUGHTON, A.R.A.

AMERICAN artists seem to be divided even more sharply than the English into the two camps of old and new. Their differences are extreme—the bygone work being perhaps even more inartificial and inelegant, and that which is educated being more expert and complete, than the corresponding achievements of Englishmen. It is a truism to say that this excellence of the younger American school is due to French influences; and the prevalence of these influences in America is doubtless to be explained by



THE HEIR PRESUMPTIVE.
(Painted by George H. Boughton, A.R.A.)

the absence from the New World of that mediævalism which has divided the young forces of English talent. Half our capable men are studying, directly or indirectly, in Continental schools, and half are devoted to the study of antique forms. Among the Transatlantic students there is no such separation; all the promise of the country is directed by Paris and Munich, with the consequence that the Anglo-Saxon characteristics are much more thoroughly rooted out of artistic America than they are out of artistic England. On the other hand, the fact that old-fashioned America is somewhat more hopeless than old-fashioned England is due, of course, to what has been, until comparatively late years, the great separateness of the New World.

We hardly know how to place Mr. Boughton in the matter of nationality, as he is claimed by America on the ground of education and early residence alone. By the accident of birth, indeed, he is English; but the young nation of which he is generally considered a citizen adopts the illustrious strangers who harbour in her ports, and, as a rule, is chosen by them for their mother as decisively as they are by her adopted for her sons. However this may be with Mr. Boughton, he is in his art distinctively an American under foreign influences. Something of England has, indeed, found its way into his subjects; for his pencil has dealt with the old pilgrims of Chaucer, with the gallants and damsels of our last century, and with the spring copses, the green pastures, and the grey weather of England in all times. But in execution he is distinguished by a certain charm and elegance which we are constrained to consider rare amongst ourselves. For, however exquisite an Englishman's conception, however excellent his drawing or fine his colour, he seldom has that charm of touch which is in itself—and quite apart from the gracefulness or ungracefulness of the object treated—distinctly graceful. Whatever be Mr. Boughton's exact nationality, therefore, we may consider him, in respect of art, as prominent in the progressive school of America. Not in the *most* progressive school, however. That, in the States, is in the hands of painters who practise more or less "impressionist" principles with extraordinary vividness and swiftness of vision. Mr. Boughton is always deliberate, and has grown more so perhaps of late years; he aims at the collection of facts rather than at the record of an effect, and his charming skill of hand has the modest appearance of carefulness, whereas the impressionist's touch, with an equal skill, has the look of triumph and virtuosity. Mr. Sargent is the type and leader of those American painters whom we must style, for want of a better word, more "advanced" than the rest of their countrymen.

Mr. Boughton's career is English; for though it began in America, his mature work has been for years past an attraction in our Royal Academy. He was born in 1834, and became an American at three years old, when he was taken to live at Albany, in the State of New York. His first studies were masterless, but it was not long before his progress received the stimulus and impetus which a first sale gives, and which nothing else can give so well. The artist is generally all the truer to his art because it is his profession also; and to a profession the test of

success which is supplied by the decisions of a market is all-important. At nineteen Mr. Boughton sold one of his first works to the American Art Union, and



"GREEN LEAVES AMONG THE SERE."

(By Permission of A. P. Dixon, Esq.)

spent the money on a visit to London—a visit of which the aim was altogether artistic. Returning to America, he worked for two years in New York, and exhibited at the National Academy, his first picture there being "Winter Twilight,"

painted in 1857. A course of diligent work in the studios of Paris followed, and in 1861 the young artist came again to London, where he finally settled, and where he has ever since had his home.

His first marked success was won by his "Passing into the Shade," exhibited in 1863 at the British Institution, a gallery which was in those days the "nursery of young reputations." The artist's youth is expressed in the rather facile sentimentality of the title—a sentimentality which was doubtless much prized by the



A DUTCH SEA-SIDE RESORT—DISCUSSING THE NEW ARRIVALS.

public of the time. "Passing into the Shade" refers to the action of a figure—a woman whose life is declining and who is walking out of sunshine into a space of shadow. Here was something to please the good public, who have always hailed any form of easy allegory with a satisfaction amounting to delight. It must be supposed that the mild ingenuity of the average mind is flattered at its own success in discovering that the "Twilight Closing in" and the "Ebbing Tide," which still figure pretty frequently in our catalogues, are words that bear a double meaning, and refer to the approaching end of some inevitable old man or old woman. In like manner Goethe's "More Light," uttered when his dying eyes were dim, has always filled the general breast with a peculiar pleasure. Mr. Boughton's later

work has been altogether free from this sort of thing; the human interest of the figures which he combines with his finely-studied landscapes does not often depend on such cheap allusiveness, but is candid and direct. Besides its popular success, "Passing into the Shade" won more important praise upon technical grounds; and at the Royal Academy, in the same year, "Through the Fields" and "Hop-Pickers Returning" attracted considerable attention. Most of the artist's subjects, then and since, have belonged to peasant life, and have dealt with that "pathos of labour" of which it is possible to hear too much, and which needs as much reserve as sincerity in the treatment. The best things—and assuredly the pathos of labour is one of the best things in the world—are liable to be spoilt, not by repetition, but by the insincerity, the ready-made feeling, which much repetition generally implies. Mr. Boughton has painted his peasants with a reserve which is the best preservative against this cheapening of good subjects and good thoughts; as a rule he avoids emotions, painting even a painful subject, such as his "Bearers of the Burden," with as little indulgence in explicit sentiment as is shown by a French writer of the realistic school. It may be added that he carries this reserve of feeling into other matters. For instance, although he has now and then shown with how great charm he can paint the light and colour of a lucid blue sky and the gold of low sunshine, he generally refrains from colour and bright weather, choosing rather to work subtly within the narrow limits of grey effects. He apparently considers that the placing together of pleasant tints is not to be the chief aim of the colourist, but that there are things to be achieved more delicate and difficult, if less obvious.

From the time of his beginning, in 1863, there has been no year in which the Royal Academy has not had pictures from his hand; and the National Academy of New York, the Grosvenor Gallery here, and the various Internationals which have taken place in twenty years, have all had him for a contributor. In fact, the record of his canvases shown in any one institution alone is altogether inadequate to commemorate the sum of his work. English readers, however, will have associations principally with the following titles, all of pictures exhibited at the Academy. In 1864 appeared "The Interminable Story," and "Industry;" in 1867, "Early Puritans of New England;" in 1868, a "Breton Pastoral;" in 1870, "The Age of Gallantry"—a bit of last-century life treated with elegant humour and set in a pleasing effect of silvery haze; and in 1871, "Colder than Snow," and "A Chapter from Pamela." In 1873, "The Heir Presumptive" was exhibited; and in 1874, "The Canterbury Pilgrims," a delightful picture of Chaucer and Spring—and Mr. Aubrey de Vere tells us that "Chaucer is Spring;" in 1875, "Grey Days," and "Bearers of the Burden;" in 1876, a portrait of Master Graham Pettie, the son of the Academician, in Seventeenth Century costume, and "A Surrey Pastoral," a twilight scene, ascetically and dimly coloured, with a faint rising moon, and gleaners going home across a brook; in 1877, "Homeward," and "Snow in Spring;" in 1878, "The Waning of the Honeymoon," and "Green Leaves Among the Sere;" in 1879, "Priscilla"—a snow scene, with the profile figure of the damsel, closely



THE PEACEMAKER.

clad and thickly shod, hurrying to "meeting," and "A Resting-Place;" and, in the following year, "Evangeline."

Among Mr. Boughton's Grosvenor pictures may be mentioned "The Widow's Acre," a sea-side field in which two grave and hard-faced women (probably widowed by the sea) are digging; and "Rivals," two navvies hewing at a stone-quarry, in presence of a pretty woman, whom each is anxious to impress with the superiority of his strength—a quiet study of the elementary passions. To the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition Mr. Boughton's contributions were neither few nor unimportant; and at the Paris International Exhibition of 1878 he was represented by "Snow in Spring"—a group of girls, surprised by a light fall of snow-flakes, among the primroses in a budding wood, covering their heads and tucking their dresses away from the unexpected shower; "Bearers of the Burden," a gang of English tramps upon the highway, the patient women being heavily laden, while the men fare on before; and the "Surrey Pastoral." In "Bearers of the Burden" Mr. Boughton has probably intended a gallant American protest against the overloading of women while men slouch at their ease. The thing is certainly seen in England, but it is seen in a grosser form in every other country in Europe. As to America, it may be that feminine shoulders there are not so much bent to field-labour; but we believe that the rustic wife in the States, with her Puritanically loveless life, and the incessant indoor work entailed by her very prosperity, and the oppression of her spiritual experiences, bears a burden hardly tolerable, compared with which the English "rough's" baby, and his bundle, and even the occasional weight of his fist, are not the worst things in the world.

It was in 1881 that the Academy contained the first of the series of Dutch pictures with which Mr. Boughton has thrown freshness into his own subjects, and helped to open a new and delightful field to English art. "Scheveningen, Holland," shows a group of fisher-folk on the beach of the watering-place of which the Dutch are so proud—the men apart, the women trudging together from their work at the boats. "A Dead City of the Zuyder Zee" is a charming prospect of the old town of Hoorn, left by the tide of commerce and activity, quiet in its flat lands, with its stiff avenues of trees and its unexcited population. With these were exhibited "Kitty," a portrait, and "Hester Prynne." Then came "The Burgomaster's Daughter," a fair and prosperous young citizeness of consideration, in skating costume of the seventeenth century; her green embroidered dress and cap are relieved against a snow background, her furs are warmly clasped round her throat and foster her gloved hands. "Muiden, North Holland: an Exchange of Compliments," is a pretty passage of the gayer old town life. But the most charming of these scenes from Holland is undoubtedly "The Peacemaker," with its mingling of quaint beauty and unforced humour. The landscape is flat, with the complete Dutch flatness, all the delicate little features telling against the pale horizon. Geese are strolling, feeding, holding forth with heads aloft. A comfortable Dutch couple have had a misunderstanding, of sufficient gravity and persistence to call for the good offices of the Pastor, who is reasoning away the pout of the pretty wife.

True Dutchwoman as she is, she has never laid aside her stocking. She knitted her quarrel into it, and will knit it out again. The figure of the goodman, who has taken his own grievance away to a dignified distance, is exceedingly comie, not only owing to the expressiveness of his back, but because of the local fashion of his clothing, which evidently aims at achieving the greatest breadth and the most liberal bagginess possible to human garments. An offended, a serious, a not implacable husband—he carries within that ample shirt a heart which is willing to come to terms, but which must be properly solicited.

“A Dutch Seaside Resort: Discussing the New Arrivals,” is a record of contemporary Scheveningen life, in which Mr. Boughton’s graceful hand has dealt with rough character without marring its roughness, and with the English traveller without caricature. His group of natives, by the way, are discussing the new arrivals with an interest which is mild compared with that which, in fact, the Dutch are good enough to bestow on their visitors. The foreigner remembers them as the most curious of European people; they watch him literally open-mouthed. Why a race renowned for stolidity should be so given over to inquisitiveness and astonishment it would be hard to say. But these reach such a pitch that in a town well accustomed to tourists, the ingenuous inhabitants will call one another down from higher floors and out from inner rooms, and will help the halt and the feeble quickly round the corners of streets, to help in staring at a traveller, guiltless, as far as he can tell, of any eccentricity of appearance. Of course, if an Englishman will insist upon raising a neighbourhood by the exhibition of a *puggaree*, insular oddity must be blamed; but we are leaving such cases out. With the “Seaside Resort” appeared at the Academy a bit of England—“St. Ives Bay, Cornwall.”

One of Mr. Boughton’s principal pictures in 1882 was “The Weeders of the Pavement,” a scene very striking in its space, simplicity, and suggestiveness. Here again is a “dead city of the Zuyder Zee;” and on its quays, once busy, the grass has forced its green growth between the neatly-laid stones. But Dutch eyes will not endure the grass; the harbour may be filled up with sand, and the shallow water without ships, and the quay be useless, but it shall at least be tidy; and while a little gang of round-armed women are set to the work of weeding, the old harbour-master in white trousers stands and watches them, soothing his own long leisure and the leisure of his dog. The women’s figures are admirably posed and drawn. The distances, with their grey levels of sky and water, are sad rather than sweet. Perhaps Mr. Boughton has never more resolutely avoided the temptation to charm of light or colour. In the same Grosvenor exhibition as the “Weeders” was “An Autumnal Ramble by the Spey,” an upright landscape, with one tall figure in black standing by the river—the portrait of Mrs. Priestley.

In 1885 Mr. Boughton chose a subject of historical incident, which hardly suits his powers so well as do passages of familiar life—ancient or contemporary, English or foreign—treated with his own unfamiliar delicacy. “Milton Visited by Andrew Marvell,” the painter’s chief Academy picture of that year, has great beauties of



THE RESTING-PLACE.

composition, and refinement of draughtsmanship. The coming of Marvell expresses a certain reverence—

“When I beheld the Poet, blind yet bold”—

and there is a propriety of action, or non-action, in the whole group of eight

figures. Nevertheless, the picture is indefinitely dull and deliberate. Nor do we quite forgive the old lady who is appearing through the doorway with refreshment for the poets.

Mr. Boughton has always mingled figure-painting and landscape with such unusual impartiality that he takes an equal place among the painters of nature and of men. Of the human interest of his works we have already spoken; his attention, we may add, has been divided among several aspects of life and manners, to all of which there is common a certain touch of quaintness. Whether he is painting that young gentleman of "The Age of Gallantry," who is wading up to his breeched knees into a pond to capture a water-lily for "the fair," who have incautiously admired it, or the Puritan maiden on her way to chapel, or the square Dutch wives upon the Scheveningen beach, he seeks always this quaint character. He paints women far oftener than men. So far as we remember, by the way, the taste for the oddities of the First Empire, for short-waisted costumes and poke bonnets, is altogether due to him. But if his subjects are so often feminine, his manner is never effeminate; and although he seldom treats the male figure, he can draw it vigorously and well.

As to Mr. Boughton's place as a landscape-painter, it is distinct enough. Landscape artists may be roughly divided into three classes—painters of the forest, painters of the field, and painters of the garden. The first take Nature as she is apart from the uses and pleasures of man; the second study her in her subjection to his labour and to his necessities, and in the lovely vicissitudes of the cycles of the harvest; and the third deal with her (whether they actually paint gardens or not) as altogether subject to man's artifices and subservient to his luxuries. Mr. Boughton's landscapes are never of the forest and mountain order; they are sometimes landscapes of the field, and sometimes of the garden. In the first case his work, though it deals with the realities of the fields, and does so, as we have said, with seriousness, does not attempt the homespun tragedy of Israels; in the latter case his comedy is always refined and intelligent. "The Waning of the Honeymoon," for instance—a picture of the garden class—has a delicate humour of the most unmistakable but least impertinent kind. The happy pair are grievously bored, but there is a grace in their weariness, and in our mildly cynical moments we are pleased to watch them, although the fervour and sweetness of such a picture as Sir Frederick Leighton's "Wedded" will be more welcome in our more serious moods.

Mr. Boughton's studies of Puritan New England have, naturally enough, been much appreciated in America, where most of his pictures treating of this subject have found their permanent homes. Engravings of them will be all the more welcome to English readers on this account; and we may allow ourselves a few further remarks concerning those which in this volume are reproduced. The original of one of these is an ideal portrait of Longfellow's Rose Standish, the predecessor of that Priscilla whom Miles Standish loved—of Priscilla, the most charming of old-

world New England heroines, a kind of *Mayflower* Dolly Varden. It is a very graceful presentment of what is pretty and quaint and idyllic in the romance of American Puritanism, which is mainly a romance of spiritual agony, and the remorse



EVANGELINE

that comes of sin, and the horror of the powers of Air, and in which the main elements are grim intensity, and passion, and dread. In the lovely "Evangeline" of Mr. Boughton, the realism of costume and character will be somewhat new to those readers of Longfellow who have been accustomed to look at the heroic and ideal aspect of his peasant heroine's character. Mr. Boughton's type, however, if homely, is noble also. The broad throat and small head, and beautiful firm features, suggest old and pure rustic blood; and there is in the girl's expression something which implies, potentially at least, her future sorrow and constancy. Not the figure only, but the landscape background of a seaside cornfield, the breezy sea, and the cliffs and sky, are full of the charming and sympathetic work which belongs to this artist's pencil. Also illustrating a national author is the "Hester Prynne," a passage in the penitential life of Hawthorne's unhappy heroine. The New England ground is heaped with snow; it is a time of pestilence, and a woman and child, muffling their breath for fear of infection, are hurrying past the corner of a stricken house. But she whose life is under the perpetual condemnation of shame and fear—Hester,

with her letter on her breast—stands knocking at the abandoned door, bringing the succour of food and tendance.

To 1886 belong two sprightlier canvases, Mr. Boughton drawing for his subjects from Washington Irving's famous "Knickerbocker History of New York." Here there is a certain crowding of figures; whereas the merits of this painter's drawing of the figure are best seen with a certain surrounding of atmosphere. One of these

pleasant pictures treats of the "Councillors of Peter the Headstrong." We read that "During the absence of Peter at the wars, he heard that his Council at New Amsterdam were talking sedition. He sent home his walking-staff to be laid on the table near his chair of state. It had the desired effect." Mr. Boughton renders with humour the good behaviour of the Assembly in presence of the representative walking-stick. On another canvas we see how the citizens took an edict against the smoking of tobacco.

"Omnia Vincit Amor"—a composition in which quaintness may be said to be carried to an archaic point—takes us away again from the poets of New England; a youth of too tender years is playing and singing in a wood to a little girl of very low degree indeed, who receives the homage with, it must be owned, a rather savage expression. In the "Heir Presumptive" the interest is one of feeling. It presents a beautiful autumnal landscape, animated by last-century figures which harmonise in a manner felt at once, but not easily explained, with the pathos of the chilly but gentle weather, the park trees touched with frost, the leaves swept together for burning, and the distances, opening out in the manner familiar in autumn. Along the park pathway walks a lady with her little son. Both are evidently in mourning; so is the servant, who follows leading the boy's pony. An old labourer



ROSE STANDISH.

on the estate, standing by a young tree planted for the child's future, doffs his cap. The situation, by the way, hardly explains the title. Why heir presumptive, when the little minor is obviously the heir apparent, if not the owner? Throughout the picture the drawing is very beautiful—in the figures, especially that of the old man, and in the boughs and trunks and twigs of the trees. And the painter has made

his picture express transitory life. The old man, and the grave widow, and the little lord, and the serving-man are as grass of the field, and drifting away like the leaves in their fall and flight.

In "A Resting-Place" we have an excellently composed company of tramps resting under a tree by the wayside. To give an interest to the modern English life of the roads and streets is not altogether an easy matter. We are all familiar with the peasant of fictitious art; indeed, truth compels us to own that we are somewhat tired of him. On the other hand, many of the phases of contemporary agricultural life might hardly be supposed to bear reproduction in any emphatic or insistent manner. Nevertheless, it is rather by sincerity than even by judicious selection or desirable omission that art must treat such phases, and render them both sympathetic and interesting. In "A Resting-Place," Mr. Boughton has softened little or nothing, and yet his group of tired tramps is excessively poetical, with a far more intimate and real poetry than any facile idealisation of the facts could possibly have produced. The figure of the young "rough" to the left contains in type, character, and costume the most hazardous realism of the picture, but the elegance of hand with which Mr. Boughton draws even inelegant forms, without falsifying them, redeems the passage from so much as a hint of vulgarity. The women are far nobler in type, and are nobly treated. The perfectly unconscious and unaffected expression of melancholy and weariness is given with fine appreciation. In addition to this gravity of sentiment must be noted the graceful, firm, and scientific drawing of the forms, the charm of touch with which the vegetation is treated, and the tender beauty of the landscape passage, with its reticent suggestions of life and colour. Our last illustration gives "A Field Handmaiden" of Brabant, the strong girl who earns her bread by daily toil on a thrifty farm, where every yard of land bears its close but fragmentary crop—hay, wheat, or vegetable—and where the man, the woman, and the child, turn every moment to profit. The painter has made a vigorous study of a vigorous figure, showing the weight of the burden in the tension and energy of the action. It is strange how seldom even good painters do this satisfactorily. They give too often the pose of carrying but not the effort. We may, of course, assume that when Raphael made his heavenly Madonna of San Sisto stand so unburdened by the weight of the large strong Bambino on her arm, he committed the anomaly of set purpose, having regard to an heroic treatment of the group, though even here modern realistic feeling would, rightly or wrongly, recognise a greatness and nobility in the truth of nature, even if that truth strained the tender arms and weighted the shoulder of the most spiritual of Virgins. Certainly the damsel who carries Mr. Boughton's basket of cabbages has every muscle honestly and thoroughly stretched to the work.

Mr. Boughton has a refined, gay, and pleasant American pen, as well as the pencil so well known by its work. He writes in the slight and easy fugitive manner which does not lay claim to authorship, but he never writes emptily, never even trivially, for the words are prompted by the painter's observation, by a kind



A FIELD HANDMAIDEN: BRABANT.

of pictorial habit of mind, and by a witty intelligence peculiarly national. He wrote first, as he himself tells us in his "Sketching Rambles in Holland," by an accident. Mr. Abbey had invited him to wander over the then "untrodden ways" of the less frequented tracts of the peaceful Dutch country. The two artists were to form a travelling party with "a writer of charming sketches of travel," and author and artists had purposed to produce together a little book on Holland. But the writing member failed to keep rendezvous. He did not present himself at the start, and the others strolled on without him. "As they meandered on through the placid, dreamy lowland landscapes of Cuyp and Ruysdael, even into far north Holland, never did they desery on the horizon's farthest verge a single bright speck that told the coming of the mislaid author." Sketches, however, had accumulated, and the travellers at length had "the unblushing humility which suggests that, after all, such writing as need be done we might attempt ourselves." What the world has lost from the going astray of the writing traveller we cannot tell; but the sketching travellers wrote delightfully. They drew the admirable old architecture of the country—such examples as the Town Hall at Veere, for instance—and the boats and the broad-backed men, and the women with their horned head-dresses and gold plates over their hair, and the flaxen-headed children, the animals, and the ducks. And for literature they give us excellent bits of local character and their own light-hearted ideas about the country. Quitting the fields of Holland with a kindlier farewell than Voltaire's, they express their wish that they could buy a few spare Swiss mountains, and have them ground up and distributed about over the land to raise it a few feet more out of the water. Moreover, they are careful, on going on board their steamer, to conscientiously scrape their boots, so as not to carry off a single ounce of scant Dutch soil to a land not in need of it.

Among Mr. Boughton's literary essays should be remembered "William Grobbyns," written for *Harper's Magazine*. William himself was an old labourer, from whom the artist received an astonishing revelation of the family history one September morning, on the crest of a breezy down in the south of Surrey. The place and the man are given with singular charm:—"It was almost enough delight to breathe with healthful lungs the delicious air, to simply exist in it, without work or play. There seemed to be no urgent need to sketch, fish, shoot, or be shot at, or even to asphyxiate the lightsome and unwitting insect. However, guiltless as I almost blush to own I was of any thirst for blood on that particular morning, I am bound to admit that I almost became the 'sport' of the rampant free-shooter once or twice during my wanderings. I was first of all the butt of his ridicule because I chose to sketch rather than kill or maim anything or anybody. I would not even accept the loan of a most lithesome rod and a gaudy book of flies that looked almost as 'fetching' as a brand-new box of moist colours to a giddy art-student." Mr. Boughton took with him on his walk "a thin, wiry bull-terrier for company (and so that I might use the more modest plural now and then)," and he tells us what "they" saw in near detail and distant view in a manner which

makes the reader wish that artists and bull-terriers would oftener take the descriptive writer's work out of his hands. In the course of his ramble Mr. Boughton comes upon the fagot-cutter, whose billhook keeps time to snatches of a crooning old song about "Coopid's Garden," "when not interrupted by a cough so 'hacking' that the poor old soul could almost have chopped the 'fuzz' bushes with it." Of course the artist sketches the old man, and the exquisitely perceived signs of character and habit in him are rendered with pen and pencil.

Mr. Boughton's house, on the top of Campden Hill, Kensington, is of yellow brick and red tiles, the tiles, which almost face the house, being of an unusually good colour, and the arrangement very happy. It is a house without even such small pretension to town stateliness as our domestic architecture—that pleasant Tudor, with Victorian modifications, which we choose to call "Queen Anne"—ever makes. It has a country-like, almost a farm-house-like feeling, combined with a quaint refinement; and, as regards its interior, it is pervaded with quiet and subtle colour, rather higher in tone and warmer in tint than the usual colour of Morris furniture. The effects are distinctively English—effects of textile fabrics and opaque surfaces rather than of marble and polish—and the graceful perspectives of the ground-floor rooms are caught between ample and abundant curtains, folded back with great regard to form and line. One of the gems of the house is a little *entresol* room, delicately coloured with various touches of straw-colour, amongst others, and having a beautifully designed frieze of upright daffodils, or jonquils. Mr. Boughton's studio is a very unaffected work-room, lined and decorated, but by no means hampered, with beautiful things, and the *bric-à-brac* which an artist knows how to choose on his travels.





*Very truly yours
Keeley Halswelle*

(From a Photograph by Mr. Albert E. Fradelle.)

KEELEY HALSWELLE, A.R.S.A.

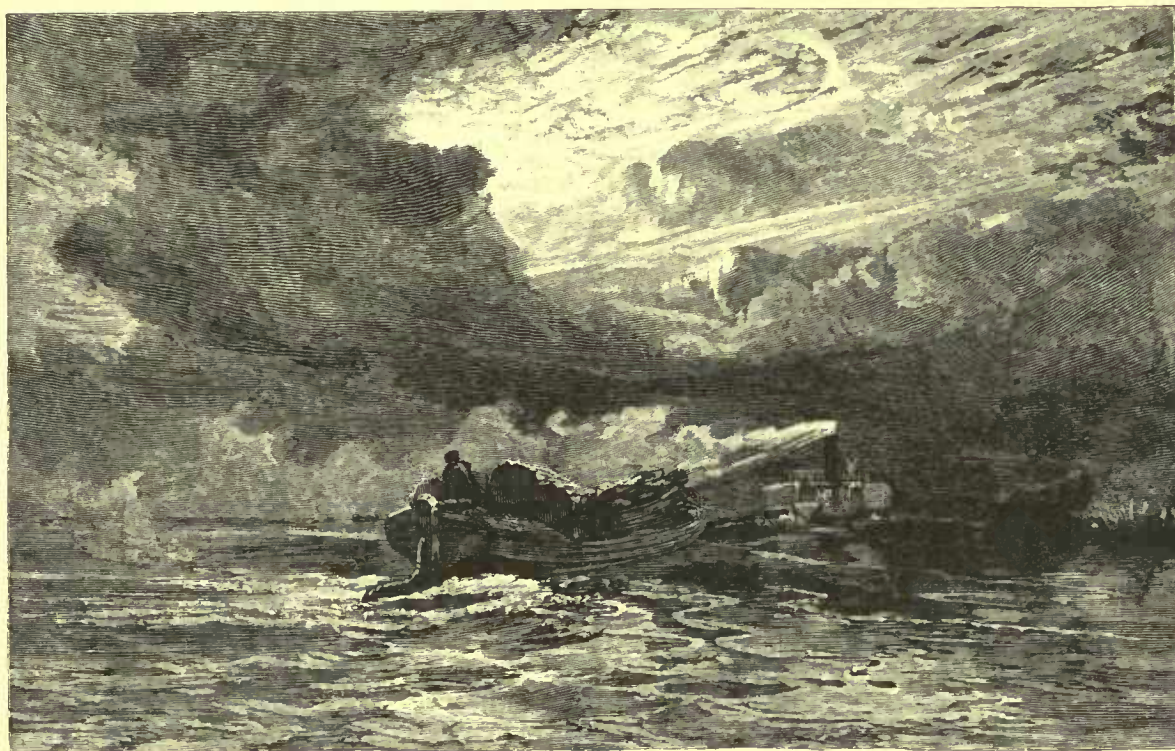
EVEN to that large class of the public who visit picture exhibitions more with a view of looking at people than at pictures, that is, at the world of dress and fashion, rather than at the world of art, the name of Keeley Halswelle may possibly be associated with certain magnificent landscapes of recent date; for by means of these noble productions the artist has riveted the attention even of those persons who might be supposed to care little for the beauties of natural scenery or rare and sublime atmospheric effects. Thus he has somewhat suddenly greatly enlarged the circle of his admirers, and sprung into a popularity very extended in its range. The most casual observer, if he allowed his eyes to wander at all over the walls of the Royal Academy or the Grosvenor Gallery during the season of 1880, must have

been struck by the power and beauty, for example, of two works bearing respectively the titles of "Flood on the Thames" and "Tug and Timber-Barge." Since then, "all sorts and conditions of men" have bestowed their admiration upon "The Silvery Thames," "Fen-land," "After Rain," and the many scenic pictures which have represented Mr. Keeley Halswelle's labours in the years that have just passed by.

That other and less numerous class of the public, however, which studiously follows the progress of art in England, and which watches with cultivated judgment the upward steps of artists of promise, has long ago known Mr. Keeley Halswelle. By discerning onlookers he has been recognised in England for the last ten or twelve years as a high-class figure-painter, and amongst his brother artists for a much longer period he has been ranked as conspicuous among coming men. But somehow he does not seem to have caught the universal eye of the public, or to have held it very persistently, until he appeared in the—to some, unexpected—character of a skilled *paysagiste*. Those to whom this change of front on his part seemed sudden and surprising, and who had looked on him solely as a coming rival to such painters as John Phillip, Edwin Long, John Burgess, and the like, have, however, only to go yet a little farther back into his history to learn that this manifestation of a vast capacity for dealing with landscape pure and simple is but a return to his old and earliest love. This is no doubt chiefly due to a protracted residence in Edinburgh, where a great part of his early artistic life was spent, the results of which did not travel south for some considerable time. But since he was born at Richmond, in Surrey, in 1832, it will be seen that Keeley Halswelle was cradled and brought up, as it were, in the very midst of the scenery in which he delights, and the various phases of which he is portraying now, in his maturity, with consummate force and skill. It is not wonderful, therefore, that such favourable surroundings in early life should have fostered the intuitive feeling and affection for landscape with which he is obviously endowed. No more happy combination of circumstances, nor any more likely to lead to happy results, could be looked for than for a born landscape-painter to first see the light amidst the sylvan beauties of the river. We are told that when quite a boy he showed the keenest appreciation of and feeling for natural scenery, and every moment that he could steal from his studies was devoted to drawing and sketching. Raids were made after the picturesque in all directions on the banks of "the silvery Thames," and thus the foundation was laid for that love of the river which has stood him in such good stead, and which he is developing with such marked success.

Nevertheless, like many another young aspirant to artistic honours, he met with the reverse of encouragement from his family; but as he persisted in his determination to become an artist, a half-hearted concession was made to his desires by a post being found for him in an architect's office. The drudgery of the work there—albeit of ultimate benefit to him, as he must have found when turning his attention to the architecture of Venice and Rome—was not congenial to him at the time, and we may suppose that it was in obedience to some resistance on his part that

he was finally placed under the guidance of an able engraver, and permitted to pursue his studies at the British Museum. Finding employment subsequently, as a wood draughtsman, on *The Illustrated London News* and other pictorial publications, he was enabled to keep afloat, and by degrees to strike out for himself until the crest of the wave was reached—that wave which is now rapidly bearing him forward upon the flood-tide of no ordinary prosperity. Destiny, however, taking him to Edinburgh about the year 1854, he discovered in the Scottish capital a wider field for the versatility of his talents; and, through a happy introduction to Robert Chambers and William Nelson, he was soon occupied in illustrating very many of



TUG AND TIMBER-BARGE.

their most important publications—notably the poems of Robert Herrick, and “Chambers’s Illustrated Shakespeare.” Thus it came to pass that he settled in the “Modern Athens” for something like ten years, during which period he availed himself to the utmost not only of the picturesque beauty of the city and its environs, by which, as a landscapist, he would be naturally fascinated, but of the advantages which the Royal Scottish Academy offered him for study. He entered himself as a student, and in due time began to exhibit at the annual exhibitions of the institution. It was in 1857 with a picture called “In Vino Veritas” that our artist made his *début* as a painter, following it up in successive years with “The Bridge of Sighs” (a work which gained him considerable renown) and very many highly-commendable efforts, the themes of which were for the most part taken from the fisher-life of

the neighbouring Newhaven. Later on he exhibited subjects very varied in their character, as may be judged by a glance at the titles of one season's contributions alone. In 1866 he was elected an Associate of the Royal Scottish Academy, and the next year we find against his name the following:—"A Message from the Sea;" "Jack Cade's Rabblement;" "Summer Moonlight;" "Whistle, and I'll come to you, my Lad;" "The Burgomaster;" certain portraits and other works—no mean or monotonous contingent, surely, for a single brush to supply! Nor does this list represent all his labours, for it was in the spring of the same year (1867) that he made his first appearance at the London Royal Academy with one of his Newhaven subjects, although he had been worthily though unimportantly represented in the Southern metropolis prior to this by a drawing called "A Child's Dream," which found a place in the International Exhibition of 1862.

It was the result of a visit to Rome made in 1868, however, which first caught the attention of the London *cognoscenti*. The opening of the new rooms of the Royal Academy at Burlington House, in 1869, was marked by many pictorial novelties, chief amongst these being Mr. Halswelle's "Roba di Roma." This picture, besides receiving warm approval in London, gained for its painter in the subsequent autumn a prize of £50 as the best work exhibited at the Royal Institution, Manchester. It was also the beginning of that series of canvases which has established his reputation as a gifted painter, destined worthily to share the laurels worn by those of his predecessors and contemporaries who have sought their inspirations in the South. And this somewhat conventional manner of describing his success comes readily to the pen as in a certain harmony with the character of the work. Mr. Halswelle was decidedly not a realist. In fact, when he painted his Romans realism was not in the English school. Some French painters had begun to see the Italians as they were; but it was still in a manner obligatory upon the Englishman to make-believe a great deal. He would hardly permit himself to see the really characteristic beauty of an Italian face, with the eyes set far apart and the short sculpturesque chin, for he was bound to a tradition of oval outlines, and, above all, of large eyes and little mouths—remains of the ideals of the Books of Beauty, produced before photography had performed its one serious service in correcting insipid popular extravagances in regard to the human face. And the English painter, moreover, would hardly have been forgiven if he had not dressed his Italian woman—with a level disregard of local habits and of the change of peasant fashions—in the thick striped apron and white sleeves and *tovaglia* of the tourist's dream. It must be owned that Mr. Keeley Halswelle carried onward the tradition with even more than the usual resolution of English art. His *contadini* and *contadine* are all and more than all that custom exacted in that day. And the conventionality of type, of attitude, and of costume, gave an inevitable effect of graceful commonplace which did a real injustice to the painter's thoroughness of work and grandeur of composition. If he fell into the common painter's trick of pretending that the costume models whom he hired on the steps of the Trinità de' Monti were the population of the Roman

streets, there was no trick in the way in which his brush dealt with them. And his was a very venial error in a young painter. On second thoughts he may find out the greater nobility of simple truth, and the less obvious but stronger charm of Italy as she is. It is perhaps worth while to say that we are quite aware that even now the sheepskin and the pastoral pipe and the folded *tovaglia* may be seen in St. Peter's itself upon occasions. At the Midsummer Festival and at Easter, and sometimes at Christmas, there come into Rome a little band of pilgrims thus clad; they come and go, absorbed in their devotions—small, remote, mountain people, as unlike the grand groups of the painter's canvas as the curious and touching Real can be to the complacent Ideal learnt by heart. As we have said, however, Mr. Keeley Halswelle's "Roba" was rendered in a manner that took the art-world somewhat by surprise, and the effective subject helped the effectual work. Quite alive, probably, to this fact, the artist next produced in the following rotation eight pictures pitched more or less in the same or a similar key to that of "Roba di Roma:"—In 1870, "A Scene at the Theatre of Marcellus, Rome;" in 1871, "Contadini in St. Peter's, Rome;" in 1872, "The Elevation of the Host," and "St. Mark's, Venice;" in 1873, "Il Madonnajo, an Image-seller of the Kingdom of Naples;" in 1874, "A Roman Fruit Girl," and "Under the Lion of St. Mark;" and in 1875, "Lo Sposalizio: Bringing Home the Bride." This last canvas, it was affirmed, exceeded anything which had yet appeared from Halswelle's brush.

That Mr. Keeley Halswelle was not afraid of conventionality, or the name of it, is shown by his next choice of a subject—"Non Angli sed Angeli"—of which it may be said that it had ceased to be hackneyed—had been given up as a subject, but retained as a byword. It was this scene from English history, we believe, which Gandish exhibited to Colonel Newcome and his son, what time Clive was entering upon his career at the worthy professor's school of art. And even then the angels, gallantly recognised by the Colonel, had grown quite mature, and objected to have the date of the great picture mentioned to the visitors. By the time Mr. Halswelle attacked the theme there was nothing remaining except the remembrance of the satire. His picture assuredly had no competitor good or bad in its own season, or in many and many an Academy before or since. He has grouped his little English captives at the base of huge columns, against which they try in vain to rest their fair heads, weary with waiting. The youngest have fallen asleep, the eldest are watching events with a childish apathy. A Roman mother passing with her own swarthy children in her arms and at her knee, casts a tender look of admiration upon them, and the two monks, one of whom is the Pope Gregory to be, stand contemplating with pity the outcast beauty of the young barbarians. There is an arrangement of red and green robes, with the yellow of oranges in a basket. "Non Angli sed Angeli" offered, we may suppose, too promising an opening for the display of the painter's talents as a delineator of the nude to be resisted. It is in the Royal Academy catalogue for 1877 that we find our artist's name attached to the old title. At any rate, he seems to have been justified



FEN-LAND.

in his selection by the result, for discriminating critics at the time awarded him high praise for his powerful treatment of the subject, and declared it to be a fresh starting-point in his career.

So far, it will be observed, the London reputation of Keeley Halswelle had been made by works almost exclusively coming within the sphere of the figure and historical painter, albeit such elements of landscape as were indispensable to them lacked nothing of the skill which his known ability in that direction would warrant one to expect. But in the second picture he exhibited in 1877, "Rome from the Via Sistina," we had a taste of his quality as a *paysagiste*. Yet another important semi-historical subject, however, was to appear from his dexterous brush ere he was to throw himself, so exclusively as he is at present doing, into the arms of his early love. A very majestic and beautiful rendering of "The Play Scene in *Hamlet*" was his contribution to Burlington House in 1878; and notwithstanding that he was again dealing with well-used materials, he put them together in a highly-original, effective, and successful manner. Despite the wider claims upon a painter's powers which a work of this nature makes, our artist was equal to the occasion, and, from the perfectly novel arrangement of the *dramatis personæ* on the scene, avoided all possibility of comparison with even the most well-known treatment of the same theme. The background of this picture is particularly worthy of notice from an archæological point of view, inasmuch as it is a faithful and exact representation of a curiously ancient and but little known interior at the Tre Fontane, Rome—the spot on which, it is said, the execution of St. Paul took place. The building is of the seventh century, and although far removed from Elsinore, and erected two hundred years prior to the period of the great tragedy, Mr. Halswelle urges that it is in every way in accord with the tone and feeling of Shakespeare's masterpiece.

"Rome from the Via Sistina" was, however, the true and great success of that year. A scene of grey roofs and distant lights, subdued and diffused, it was remarkable above all for its sky. It is not too much to say that Mr. Halswelle here opened the scenery of the sky to eyes long unaccustomed to any glimpse of it in art. Of course, we have yearly beautiful bits of sky, beautiful effects of sky, a passage of blue, or a passage of cloud, or a tract of fine gradation from the height to the horizon. But a great sky has its unity, its perspective, its design—and when do we see this studied? A storm is a whole great organisation; nay, an ordinary firmament of cloud and wind is a system; but who had made us feel this, until Mr. Keeley Halswelle grasped that organisation and planned that system? Nay, seldom do painters even give us the pleasure of seeing that their clouds have an under-side, as the clouds of Nature have, and that we are looking along vast perspectives, narrowing and diminishing towards the meeting of sky and earth. Too often a cloudy sky is drawn as though it were some perpendicular firmament, or rather a fragment of such a thing. True, a great electric cloud does, in effect, stand up in towers and heights like a mountain; but a sky—a composition, a system

of cloud-formations—has always its levels, its parts, its immense foreshortenings. And nothing is more delightful than the expression and rendering of such celestial design. The scenery of the earth is studied, and so are the anatomy of man and the articulations of the trees; it was time that the kind of anatomy which binds and forms a tempestuous heaven should be seen with understanding eyes, and recorded with an intelligent art. Since that singularly beautiful scene of clouds in the Via Sistina picture, Mr. Halswelle's work has been most important as a series of skies. It would, perhaps, be hypercritical to say that his habit of treating the clouds with such consideration as painters in general show to the landscape only has led to his giving them now and then a certain heaviness or solidity. In his finest works there is no such blemish.

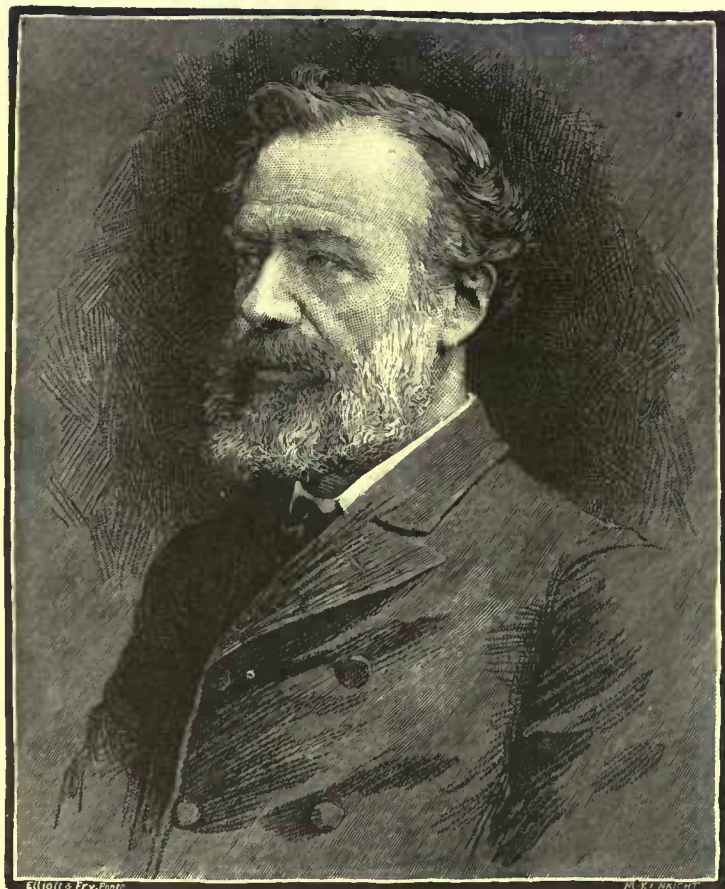
After 1877 landscape began to exercise more and more sway over our artist's nature-loving temperament; for although in 1879 he exhibited a figure picture in the old key, "Waiting for the Blessing of Pius IX. at St. John Lateran, Rome," his other two contributions for that year were landscapes, as their titles and description indicate, for thus speaks the catalogue:—"Gathering Clouds: Medmenham;" and—

"Solemn and silent everywhere
Nature with folded hands seemed there,
Kneeling at her evening prayer."

As most of us know, he now appears to have abandoned himself exclusively to similar delights. But in the full vigour of his manhood we may expect almost anything that is unexpected from Keeley Halswelle. With his far-reaching, broad, bold, and powerful brush he might create such combinations of figure and landscape as have rarely been witnessed, for he is an artist in the fullest meaning of the word, and one to whom nothing that is beautiful comes amiss. If, by-and-by, he returns in any sort to what we may call, to distinguish it, his Roman period, we shall surely find him trying to weave into his work some of the results of his now continuous labours at his "easel in the open." The freshness and initiative which he has shown in his landscape work would certainly be welcome in the treatment of the figure.

An enumeration of Mr. Keeley Halswelle's works by name would convey little inasmuch as they have no story to tell, except the varying story of cloud darkening for rain or parting for sweet weather, and of the wind changing the river-surface or shaking the reeds. His work is far too good to depend for even a small part of its interest upon the precision of place where it was studied. That the general character of his landscape is the Thames character is enough for the purpose.

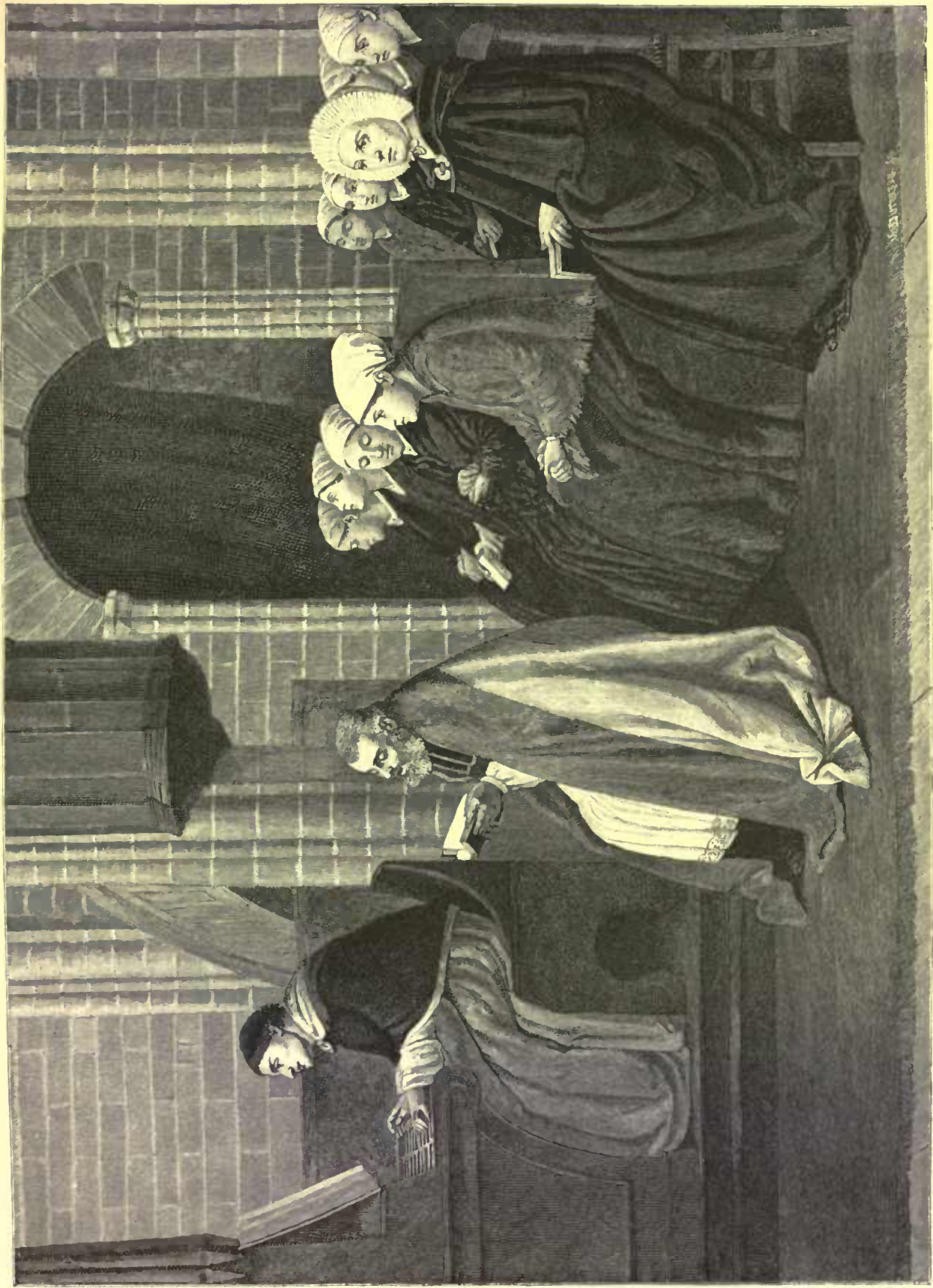
The cheery and cordial hospitality which he dispenses on certain evenings during the winter is a feature in the social art-world of London not easily to be forgotten by those who are privileged to enjoy it; and as a *rendezvous* for some of the most distinguished representatives of literature and art, that studio high up on the confines of Piccadilly will be long remembered.



*Bien à Vous,
A. Legros*

PROFESSOR LEGROS.

THE Slade Professor of Fine Arts at University College, London, cannot be said to have received no recognition in the land of his adoption, nor to be without honour in his own country. Welcomed with due respect by his peers, the representatives of serious art in England, honoured by such men as the P.R.A. and Mr. Watts among artists, by such enlightened amateurs as Prince Leopold, Mr. George Howard, and Mr. Ionides, by such etchers as Mr. Seymour Haden and Mr. Hamerton, twice the winner of the gold



"LES DEMOISELLES DU MOIS DE MARIE." (SERVICE OF THE "MONTH OF MARY.")

(Printed by Leves. By Permission of Constantine Leves, Esq.)

medal of the Salon, with pictures in the Fitzwilliam at Cambridge, in the Walker Gallery at Liverpool, on the line at the Luxembourg and in other public galleries on the Continent, he has achieved a professional reputation such as few men in middle life can boast. But notwithstanding all this, he is comparatively unknown outside the circle of his scholastic labours and the few who make a serious study



THE POOR AT MEAT.

(In the Collection of G. Howard, Esq., M.P.)

of art. Of the several reasons for his want of popularity one will be at present sufficient. The public expects artists to go half-way to meet it, and Professor Legros will not move an inch.

Nature and circumstance have combined to develop him into a serious and strong personality. He was born at Dijon in 1837, and came to Paris in 1851. He began his studies, under M. Lecoq de Boisbaudran, amid considerable difficulty, and had hardship and discouragement to encounter before he was able to send a picture

to the Salon. In 1857 he exhibited a portrait of his father which won him friends, amongst whom were Baudelaire, Gambetta, and Champfleury. And *à propos* of this early and fruitful sympathy, M. Malassis wrote in after years:—"As it always happens, a literary man was the first to take notice of him. M. Champfleury—who some years before had pointed out MM. Gustave Courbet and François Bouvin—with his discriminating curiosity always on the alert, had remarked the portrait of a man (the artist's father), painted strongly and simply, and signed with the unknown name Legros." That great Paris is a much smaller world than great London is shown by nothing more clearly than by the manner in which a clue of sympathy, admiration, interest of any kind, is generally followed up in the French capital. In Paris, to like or love a picture, a book, or a song, is always to desire and generally to obtain speedy personal knowledge of the author. In crowded and complex London, and amid English reserves and hesitations, the critic, however interested, and however delighted, seldom dreams of getting at the personality belonging to the new name with which the work that has taken his fancy is signed. He is afraid of intruding, and he does not wish to make a demonstration; the new artist or author will not care particularly for his sympathy, and has plenty of others for whose sympathy he does greatly care; and—in fact, the individuality which is behind this charming work is one of so many and so many, all made vague by distance and numbers. With some such thoughts as these the London critic pens a moderate anonymous paragraph of praise, and keeps back the word and draws in the hand that might be very gladly welcomed. In compacter and simpler Paris M. Champfleury, having admired the picture, wished immediately to know the painter. "Fancying him," M. Malassis proceeds, "as an honest middle-aged artist, obscure, deserving, and occupied in the production of modest work, he found to his surprise a young man under twenty, full of fire and *verve*, already master of a style at once solid and subtle, engaged with justifiable self-reliance upon numerous works in course of execution or preparation. The kind visit of the celebrated writer remains as the pleasantest recollection of the painter's early days. It was like the first smile of fame."

In 1859 he exhibited an "Angelus," in 1861 an "Ex-Voto," in 1863 a "Mass of the Dead." The first was bought by that fine artist and yet finer connoisseur, Mr. Seymour Haden; and later, when Legros' reputation had travelled back to France, the "Ex-Voto" was purchased for the Gallery at Dijon. Despite his friends, and his skill in drawing, painting, etching, and lithography, and despite incessant labour, his struggle for existence was a hard one; and in 1863 he sought a fairer opening in England, where he has since resided. As a man he is self-made, as an artist self-directed. No individual can be said to have been his master; he does not belong to any school, unless there be such a thing as a "serious" school. He is the pupil, mainly, of the dead, and it would be difficult to exhaust the list of those Old Masters who have truly been masters to him. Some moderns—as Corot, Rousseau, and Millet—have indeed affected him strongly, but in sentiment

rather than design; and his individuality, nourished from many sources, has grown true to its inward impulse. It would be more accurate to say impulses, for from the first Legros' delight in the cultivation and exercise of his artistic faculty, and his desire to express an unusually profound sense of the solemnity of human existence, were separate forces. Some such duality is inseparable from the life of the true artist. The thing to be said and the manner of saying it engage his energies; but in the case of Legros they may be said also to divide them. Both are to him sufficient ends in themselves, so that it is never safe to predict whether his next



THE RIVER (WATER-COLOUR DRAWING).

(By Permission of Constantine Ionides, Esq.)

work will be academic or humanist. Millet was Millet, and Corot Corot always; but Legros is sometimes Legros and sometimes the Professor.

His work of either kind should always receive respect, because it is always serious, accomplished, and sincere, whether as art or utterance. He neither plays with his tools nor trifles with his subjects, and if his faces never smile, his lines never stray. Though gravity deepening into austerity be a chief characteristic of his work, there is always a man behind it, and, moreover, a man who, careless of the vogue of the day, has chosen a stern and solitary path because it seemed to him the one in which he could do his best. Those who do not like what Legros chooses to draw cannot be blamed for neglecting him, but may yet respect the man who refuses their suffrages at the cost of self-expression. Legros' gravity was probably inborn; but

it was developed by circumstance, for life was a very serious business with him in his youth. The poverty of his parents was in nowise picturesque, and his early experiences—which included an apprenticeship to a house-painter—were no matter for jest. It is not necessary to do more than touch upon the labour and patience by which he raised himself. Much of both were required of him, and the early exercise of self-control has left its mark upon the work of his maturity. Art to him was not a kind mother nor a merry playfellow, but a grave—a very grave—angel.

The most palpable charms of art—brightness of colour, gaiety of spirit, womanly grace, amorous sentiment—were wasted upon the young Legros, whose work from the first shows study of the severer masters only, and of none more than the sculptors of Greece. If few artists have pursued less that idealisation of human beauty which was the main aim of the Greeks, still fewer have shown more thorough appreciation of their science of design, their dignity and simplicity, their reticence and repose. The majesty of Michael Angelo has evidently affected him more than the grace of Raphael, the uncompromising truth and straightforward execution of Velasquez more than the suavity and exuberance of Correggio. To the Germans, especially Holbein and Albert Dürer, he turned naturally; and amongst his own countrymen he found himself in sympathy more with the learned design and virile imagination of Nicholas Poussin than with the finished and masterly artifice of Boucher or the delicacy and romance and charm of Watteau. In Rembrandt he found another “master” whose influence over him can scarcely be exaggerated. These were the teachers to whom his “grave angel” consigned him—teachers full of that “scorn of delight” which is at once the noblest feature of his art and the greatest obstacle to its popularity.

Treating at once of Legros’ manner and of his subjects, Mr. Hamerton, who knows France more intimately and more sympathetically than many Englishmen have desired to know her, has written: “It is a country of very strange contrasts; and this contrast is noticeable amongst others, that while many French people spoil themselves by the utmost extreme of affectation, many other French people are just as remarkable for the entire absence of affectation; so that their simplicity is more simple than ours, and their directness more direct. This contrast has been long manifested in the French art of the last half-century. Side by side in the public exhibitions with art of the most pretentious extravagance grew up another school of art which discarded pretension altogether.” And going on to treat a quality near akin to simplicity, a quality which has of late, however, been aped and assumed by the most unsimple of men, of artists, and of writers, Mr. Hamerton says:—“Never was any realism so remarkable for simplicity of purpose as that of the genuine French rustic school. I do not mean the realism of the revolutionary realists, who call themselves so, but of that school which was entirely emancipated from classical authority, and used its liberty for the plain expression of its sentiment, not for the illustration of a theory. These artists were influenced neither by the authority of the classics nor by the force of the reaction against them; they worked in a calm corner of their own, safe from the flux and reflux of the great currents

of their time. M. Legros is one of them; but instead of going among the oxen and the labourers in the fields, he prefers the solemnity of the village church, or the cathedral aisle, or the quiet monastery and there he will watch his models,



THE BAPTISM.

who know not that they are watched, and who reveal to him the secret of their meditations."

And from a less tender but equally respectful critic—a Frenchman, M. Charles Guellette—we have a like testimony:—"Bold and strong in his style, sometimes even to brutality" (*brutalité* would perhaps be better translated by "roughness"



THOMAS CARLYLE

(From the Etching, "L'Homme au Chapeau.")

than by the literal word), "Legros is a proof that the artist never ceases to be true; his first attempts testified precisely to that conscientious research, to that obstinate labour which he brings to the interpretation of Nature. . . . M. Legros has never flattered either the taste or the tendencies of his time; it is thus that he has remained himself, and that in each one of his impressions he has subordinated the form to an original and powerful thought."

Although in his late essays in sculpture Legros has allowed himself unusual indulgence in beauty and grace, in some respects his artistic creed seems to have grown more strict with years. In his earlier pictures the colour was often choice and rich; now he sometimes seems to treat colour-beauty as a sin. To those who have seen only his later works, exhibited in the Grosvenor, such as "Jacob's Ladder" and "The Fire," or the "St. Jerome," "Before the Service," with its full transparent tones of red and green and gold, would be a revelation of unsuspected power. "Baptism" is another picture in which Legros appears not only skilful but inventive as a colourist; and "The Poor at Meat" is, in its noble sobriety, one of those grand harmonies of browns which the old Spanish masters loved. Such pictures show that Legros' late disregard of select and beautiful colour is carelessness or perversity.

As a draughtsman Legros is an acknowledged master; and his drawing has in abundance a quality often wanting in the drawing of artists that are his equals in accuracy—we mean the quality of life. He is inventive and even passionate in his touches. His lines are divined with imagination as well as sight, so that the most literal copy of the ugliest old man from his hand is vitalised with something of his own spirit, and informed with something of his own faculty of design. Legros at work is a sight worth seeing. As he draws and paints before his classes, the vigour with which he seizes not only the outline and salient features of the model, but the whole solid structure, is very remarkable. A swift dash of the brush to mark the line of the brows, two more for nose and mouth, a sharp succession of sweeps for boundaries of hair and flesh, a little quick work to block out the depressions and prominences, and the head, roughly but truly modelled, is created. From the beginning to the end of the two hours or so, when the study is generally brought to a point that needs only "finish," every touch adds something as palpable in intention and effect as the addition of brick to brick in the building of a wall. Of course, rapidity is only one, and the least, of the qualities which are practised and taught by time-sketching. The chief thing aimed at is to make a *true beginning*. For a true beginning is the one absolute master-key of good work. To prove that this has been achieved it is well, therefore, to practise beginnings, and therefore to time the sketch, so that it may not be carried beyond a certain point, and may have the first intention in every touch. The student learns in this way the value of every moment of his foundation-work. But mere rapidity is by no means to be despised, even by the artist who works in all the deliberation of the studio, and for him who would learn how to catch a child at play, a labourer in

excellent action at his work, a sky on the wing, quickness is of great value. And quickness in its right sense means simply seeing true and wasting no strokes. As Millet used to say, "to see rightly is to draw rightly;" and Legros' lessons with the brush and needle teach the eye as well as the hand. In this the value of the system lies, and the only objection to it seems to be that it needs the possession of skill, nerve, and concentration not often found among professors. The studies, when done, are nothing but studies; and their frequent exhibition with finished pictures by other artists has led to the conclusion—not perhaps unnatural, but altogether false—that Legros exhibits them to prove his skill, and not the soundness of his method of teaching. Here Legros and the Professor are confused, and the man of all others to shun popularity has been accused of charlatanism. To those that know Legros and what he can do, the notion that he should wish to pose before the public as a man that can produce a study of a model swiftly and surely is ludicrous.

In design Legros does not seek beauty so much as distinction. The charm of grace has less attraction for him than strength of character, and he foregoes the ideal for the type. That he is in nowise insensible to physical beauty is seen in some sweet faces in his picture of the "Baptism," as well as in his recent sculpture, and here and there in his etchings, especially in their first states.

The extreme severity of what Matthew Arnold might call the artist's "criticism of life" seems to require some natural melancholy of disposition to account for it. The best means of studying it is afforded by his etchings, perhaps the most sustained and considerable of his achievements in art; and the present writer must here return his thanks to M. Thibaudeau, of Green Street, Leicester Square, who has allowed him to examine his almost perfect collection. The eight huge portfolios do not contain one scene of happiness or a face that smiles. The least gloomy are the portraits and studies of models; but none of these are cheerful, not even that of the artist's young daughter. His pictures of peasant life are all sad; those of a religious cast are mostly ascetic and stern; the landscapes are usually weird and melancholy; while the compositions in which his imagination has freest play seek a grim and dreadful kind of romance in the discipline of Spanish convents, or are the expression of a fearful fantasy. And it is very curious to note that the writer who seizes peculiarly upon the morbid moments of French minds was his inspiration in his gloomy moods. The English reader fails to find in Poe all the flesh-creeping influences for which he is treasured and feared in France. No great Englishman or American that we know has felt or proclaimed those influences, none certainly has ascribed his own fancies to them as Théophile Gautier, Baudelaire, and Legros have done in turn. For the depth of horror to which this artist can descend is shown by some illustrations to Poe's most gruesome tales, such as "The Pêndulum" and "The Black Cat," as well as by his design of a group of unwholesomely curious savants experimenting on a corpse with a galvanic battery. Such a determination to the black side of things must be constitutional. It is to be doubted whether

even his gloomy view of the life of the poor can be accounted for entirely by his experience. He gives us their labour in the fields, but never their laugh at the cabaret; he paints their fasts and death-beds, but never their marriages and festivals. His bathers are depressed, his fishers out of spirits, his travellers either tired or caught in the rain. Millet was always grave, but his gravity was always sweet. The sadness of Legros is sometimes grim and terrible. When we turn to his Biblical and religious subjects, we find him depicting not the rapture of the Madonna nor the joy of the Prodigal's return, but the agony of Job on the dunghill, and the repentance of the swineherd in the sty; not the glory of the chancel nor the mirth of the feast-day, but the gravity of the convent and the toil of the pilgrimage. There is happiness, perhaps, in the heart of the "Monk at the Organ" (one of the noblest of modern etchings), and in that of the woman receiving the Sacrament in the "Communion in the Church of St. Médard;" but it is the happiness of resignation rather than hope, of awe rather than rapture. Yet there is such strength and truth in these solemn imaginings that no one can say that Legros has cultivated his sombre genius in vain. His "Pilgrimage to the Caves of St. Médard," which has been well called "a masterpiece of the sordid-picturesque," his grand "St. Jerome" (far finer than his picture of the same name), his "Job," his "Discipline," his "Interior of a Spanish Church," his "Chantrey," are as impressive humanly as they are fine in artistic conception. Moreover, in depicting the gloomy side of things, he does it without compromise, without any tampering with sentiment, never trying to interest us in poverty by the accident of beauty in a face, nor in religion by physical sweetness of expression.

The austerity of his views both of life and of art affects his pictures not only of humanity, but of inanimate nature. In one or two of his etchings he indeed shows some delight in the elegance as well as the strength of trees. In the "Sheep Recovered" he gives us receding rows of poplars graceful not only in composition but in themselves; in others, like the "Catching Crayfish," he indulges in a quite Titianesque grandeur of trunk and mass of foliage. But he oftener contents himself with bare stems more remarkable for their strength than their beauty, and these he frequently cuts off a few feet above the ground, leaving nothing but stumps, decorated with a few most melancholy twigs. Nevertheless, he has put forth all his force in some of these landscapes, with or without figures, and even more than his accustomed imagination. Some of them, as the "Women Bathing" and the "Gust of Wind," are of astounding strength in point of design and light and shade; so, too, is a majestic series of large landscapes in sepia, which are equally remarkable for poetry of conception and grandeur of composition.

And yet, after all, though we have been led into dwelling upon this painter's melancholy, it is certain that in a very great number of his finest works melancholy is less the characteristic than perfect seriousness. In "The Communion," "The Baptism," "Ex-Voto," in many of the quiet incidents of pilgrimage and prayer, he has denied himself all emphasis of expression. He has not seen it in the modesty

of nature, and he has not chosen to violate by it the modesty of art. The religious women of rustic France are not fanatics, and though it might have been picturesque in a vulgar sense to give them a touch of fanaticism, Legros has



DEATH AND THE WOODCUTTER.

presented them, in many a scene of their quiet lives, with their own unconscious and sincere bearing, their own negative and undemonstrative expression. Without terror, without tears, without gesture, without effect, without vanity, without impulsiveness, the Breton woman is simply the most God-fearing creature on the earth; nothing but this word of old use will describe her. Her father, her husband, and her son have their weaknesses. They are apt to find relief from the laboriousness of life, and

possibly also from the rigour and perfection of their women, in much—in over-much—drinking. To be frank, the Bretons, who have few other grave faults, who are seldom unwilling to do penance at a “Pardon,” and who even yet are slow to conform to the national freethought, are among the most drunken of mankind. But she who keeps the roysterer’s home clean, and bears and disciplines his children,

and labours with him for their bread, is, at her best, a singularly faultless human being; she denies herself vanity—nay, the very consciousness of youth or beauty, she refuses herself ease of body or sloth of soul; she rests neither from her knitting nor from her rosary; she permits herself neither the pleasure of dancing nor the stimulus of “revivalist” forms of religion. And all these abstentions give her face the serious look—not exalted, not rapt, not sorrowful, not joyous—which Legros has rendered in many a group. And to a public accustomed to emphasis and effect

(and we blame the painters who have accustomed them) his peasant women on pilgrimage and at church look doubtless somewhat uninteresting. It hardly seems enough that a young face, sweet and comely under its austere cap, should express simple recollection and gravity; a sentimental taste or habit would require a hint of anxious or yearning or disappointed love. Still less exciting is it to the ordinary mind to have to contemplate the picture of an old woman whose brow is wrinkled by time, not by sufferings, or that of a wife in uninteresting middle



THE DARWIN MEDAL.

age, whose hard features present a grave record of simple labour and prayer, and an equally grave promise of only a little less labour in weakening years, only a little more prayer.

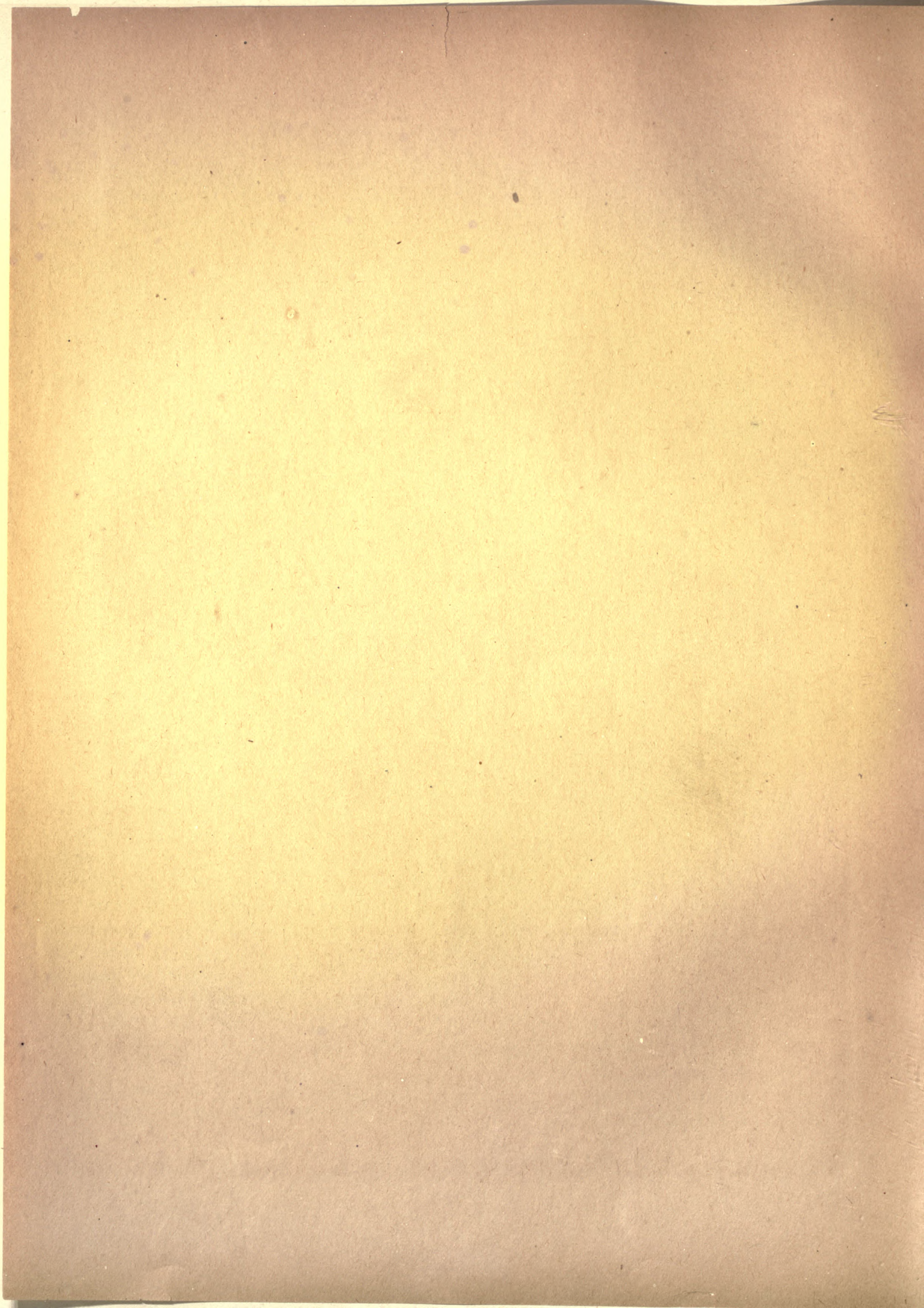
And, indeed, a Greek ideal of life or a Renaissance ideal of life would by no means be satisfied with the negations and severities of M. Legros' rustics. Beauty and joy of heart, and liberal sweetness of existence, are good things, or, if not, at least are delightful things; and if they are desirable in actual life, they have generally been allowed—perhaps in all schools except the terribly ascetic phase of the Spanish school—to be necessities in art. Here, however, is art that will not own them. It is strange, perhaps, that we should so easily forgive their absence

from Legros' pictures. We do forgive it, doubtless, because joy, beauty, and sweetness, vulgarised, have been the paltry ideal of all the bad and trivial art that has ever cumbered the earth. Doubtless, too, because the ascetic theory has not wholly passed away even from the English mind, as, indeed, once impressed upon the Christian world, it will never pass away as long as the earth endures.

Another strong reason why M. Legros' whole ethical and artistic attitude should be respected is that he paints these serious subjects from within. And rarer and rarer, as the world goes on, becomes the artist who is thus a part of what he paints. As a rule, the modern painter is a cultivated student of life, an observer, full of sympathy sometimes, no doubt, always full of a liberal human curiosity as to the thoughts and emotions of those he goes to watch and study. But he does watch and he does study them from outside; as a very earnest dilettante, perhaps, but inevitably as a dilettante. A workman to the tips of his fingers as regards art, the modern painter is almost always an amateur as regards life. To share the creeds or the convictions of the people he paints would be to take life altogether too much to heart—too intimately, too seriously. But that rustic school of France has the altogether inimitable distinction that its art was professed by men who took nothing in vain—not even their own souls! Poor among the poor, Christians among the Christians, they worked with a reality which no mere sympathy, however liberal, no mere intelligence, however delicate, can compass. That the artistic temperament, which tends so much to dilettantism in life, should be possessed by men of this temper was the wonderful thing, and the thing which produced a wonderful result.

M. Legros has taken other ways of life, it is true, but he has not changed his heart. He has not remained, like Millet, to live and die among the scenes and people of his birth and of his work, but he has kept the close bonds of convictions, and traditions and habits of the mind. And these cause him to paint his own subjects as no stranger could render them. In treating the French clergy, for instance, at their ministrations, he presents them with that grave character, that absence of easy effectiveness or exaggeration, which a mere observer could hardly teach himself. He has found the serious, moderate realities of this class fully sufficient for his truthful purpose, so that he never shows us a priest's face in which we may be tempted to read the commonplace romances which our prejudices suggest to us. His priests are such as the seminary produces them, and by no means such as any outsider's fancy would create them. He never violates nor forces their nature for the sake of the picturesque, but neither does he idealise. Here, as among the characters he has studied, we see purely gravity and truth.

In Legros' different versions of "Death and the Woodcutter" (the most impressive of all the exercises of his imagination, and almost alone in modern art in their successful treatment of the supernatural) it is clear that the inspiration is due to Holbein; and this is most apparent in the earliest and perhaps the greatest of all his contributions to the *Danse Macabre*, and "Death in the Pear-tree," an episode in the legend of the *Bonhomme Misère*. It is clear also that if his feeling as a





E Grutzner pinx

E Piekal sculp

THE MASTER BREWER OF THE MONASTERY



A SAILOR'S WIFE.

(Group in Bronze.)

humanist and his ardour as an artist often, as in this case, work together for good, they sometimes make him careless both of the human import and of the refinement of his subject. Such a perpetual source of interest to him are the faces of ordinary men, and so much delight does he take in getting the artistic best out of ordinary materials, that he attacks a Browning or a beggar, a castle or a cow-shed, with equal gusto. In the last state of a plate on which he first drew faultlessly the profile of a distinguished man with one of the most refined of living faces, he turned the features into those of a degenerate type, bestowing as much labour on the travesty as on the original. Hyperion or a satyr, race-horse or cab hack, his artistic appetite seems equally ready for either. That this is not from want of appreciation of nobility of form or character is shown by the perfection with which he has portrayed the heads of some distinguished men. His magnificent portraits of Manning and of Watts, and of Carlyle ("L'Homme au Chapeau") and Rodin, his worthy record of the bright fine face of his lost friend Regamey, his head of Dalou (perhaps the most perfect in design and consummate in execution of them all), are masterpieces of portraiture and etching. That the man who can do work so interesting to his generation should spend so much time upon "models" is an extraordinary instance of the impartiality as to subject which springs from a passion for art in the abstract.

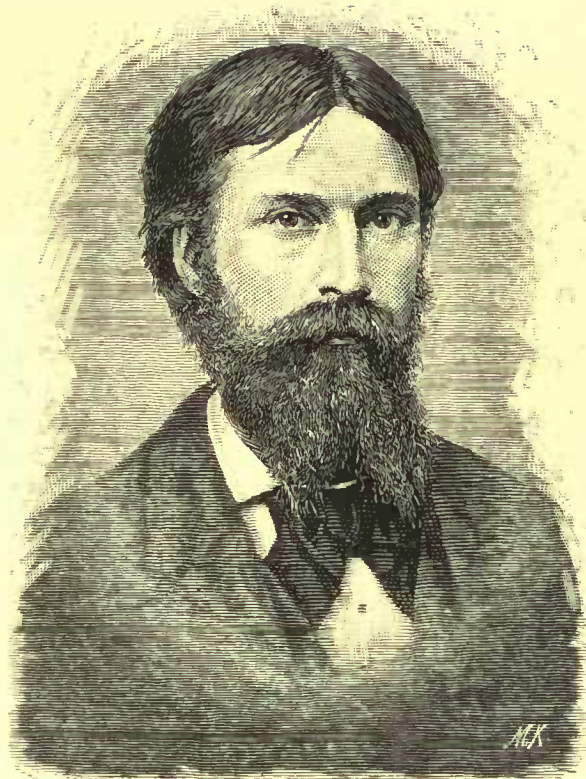
This passion, however, and the rare genius for expressing ideas by form that is shown in all his designs from first to last, are special qualifications for sculpture, to which noble branch of art he has turned his attention. Such disregard of grace as he has hitherto shown will scarcely be consistent with his own satisfaction as a plastic artist. Although severity marks his "Sailor's Wife," in the fine group which we reproduce, and though her face is not ideal, both her figure and her features are not only noble but beautiful. A touch of the "wild" distinguishes his bas-relief, "The Source," from the exquisitely pretty achievement of Ingres; but the lithe young figure is modelled with notable delicacy and distinction, and is full of chaste charm. Of his medals, the mighty head of Darwin—engraved from the plaster, not the bronze—is here to speak for itself. This, and the dozen others he has just produced, are nearer to the work of Pisano than any executed since that incomparable master, with the exception, possibly, of one or two by the late David d'Angers. His artistic efforts have been many and varied and lofty; he has achieved mastery as a painter, an etcher, and a draughtsman in all known materials; but his whole energy may be said to have culminated in these essays in sculpture, which as yet are scarcely before the public eye.

In viewing the achievement of an artist like Legros, nothing like finality can be attempted. Whether the last fruits of his unwearying energy and superb artistic faculty will add to his popularity, as they will doubtless add to his reputation among artists, remains to be seen; but there is reason to hope that his great learning and skill, his deep sincerity and true imagination, have at last found a field for their exercise congenial to the spirit of his time, and not too far removed from the taste of the modern Briton. All who prize imaginative design and vital draughtsmanship

for their own sakes will now and ever prize some of his etchings. But such persons are few. To extend the range of his admirers, not only the manner but the matter must be interesting to his contemporaries. Save in a few portraits, Legros can scarcely be said to have come within speaking distance of the great mass of the public. Handicapped by a natural bent towards the solemn, he has been hindered in the race for popularity by choosing to "run" in a foreign country. He is a naturalised Englishman, but whatever of modern there has been in his art hitherto (and that is not too much) is French. He speaks not only like an Old Master, and from the grave, as it were, but in a strange tongue; and he needs translation as well as sympathy. He may fairly be asked to try harder than as yet he has tried to make his art agreeable to the public, which, with all its faults and ignorance, is always ready to recognise such merit as it can perceive. He has no right to hide the light of his genius under the bushel of pride. Popularity should not, indeed, be purchased at the cost of self-respect; but one whose aim is to add to the sum of serious thought and true feeling in his contemporaries may, and in fact ought to strive to secure it.

That this has in the main been the aim of Professor Legros, his works bear witness. They are grave, austere, ascetic, terrible, sometimes horrible and sometimes dull; but they are very rarely morbid and never ignoble. They are, moreover, in the purest sense religious. Even his models are represented not so much as items of a social community, as of a race suspended between two eternities. The aspirations of a human soul towards a life beyond have been the motive of his least melancholy, the fears of that life of his grimmest, imaginings. The supernatural and unseen forces which bring us hither, mould our destinies while we are here, and then withdraw us once more behind the veil, are always present, if invisible, in his creations. For him the play of life is a tragedy, which he depicts with unfailing sympathy for his brothers on the stage.





John Fairbairn
Hubert Herkomer

(From a Photograph by Messrs. Elliott and Fry.)

HUBERT HERKOMER, A.R.A.

ENGLAND has always shown a facility—nay, an alacrity—in assimilating the elements of the foreign genius. Insular we must needs be, but our insularity is modified by a genuine receptiveness. Our language is distinctively our own, yet it is combined from the tongues of alien races with more richness of various mixtures than is to be found in the speech of nations “unwalled by seas;” our blood is mingled, and the more mingled the better for intellectual strength and physical beauty; and now our art, which has of late been much less general than the other phases of our life and culture, has begun again to profit by the example and experience of those countries which have more of the pictorial, as we have more of the literary, genius. And it is not merely example and experience for which we owe thanks to



DRAWN & ETCHED BY HUBERT HERKOMER, A.R.A.

Touched.

*Mourfully twangs the youth the low-toned strings of the Zither:
Surely 'tis nought but Love can give such skill to his fingers.*

FRANZ VON KOBELL.

France, Italy, Holland, Hungary, Spain, and Bavaria; for they have lent us the more vital elements of contemporary work. The name of Mr. Herkomer is immediately called to mind as that of an illustrious stranger within our gates, who has given English art this most effectual help, and from whom it has derived an individual kind of vigour. Nor, indeed, is there any work in our galleries which, in matter as in manner, has more evident purpose and more living intention than his. He has apparently so little sympathy with any but the austerer phases of life and character that he seldom deals with the youth and beauty and affluence of this world. Two things are to him superlatively attractive—old age and poverty; and these he treats, not with sentimental softness, not with an over-insistence upon that pathos of labour of which we have had so much in recent art; he does not seek to make the decay of life pretty by investing it with what we may call a kind of vulgar poetry; but on the other hand nothing which he touches is left prosaic. No one who rates at its true value the facile picture of peasant life with which we are all familiar can fail to understand what we mean by vulgar poetry; and no one who knows the Dutch school of Jan Steen and the English school of George Cruikshank is ignorant of the most prosaic of all prose in the art which deals with “low life.” Mr. Herkomer has taken the line of truth, sincerer than that of the sentimentalist, and nobler than that of the “humourist.” It is his love of truth, indeed, which has made the peasant dear to him; only by singleness and sincerity can such a subject be understood and loved. And with regard to this love he has adopted a quasi-paradox of Mr. Ruskin’s, whose heart is altogether with every true painter of the grave and innocent life of shepherds and villagers: “The painter must love the peasant more than his picture, but the picture must be something better than the peasant.” Moreover, Mr. Herkomer paints his subject with a sympathy which can come only of intimate knowledge. For though English in his studies and by choice, he seems to be also a Bavarian, and a Bavarian of the mountains, at heart. It was Mr. Ruskin, if we remember right, who first drew attention to the fact of the keen, tender, and abiding patriotism of the denizens of hill-countries in comparison with the feeling of dwellers in plains. It is true that the Dutch are, and have been always, politically patriotic, but their heroic love of country has clung rather to their own people and their own principles than to the actual soil; whereas the mountaineer passionately loves the rocks and rivers, the sheep-tracks, the lonely dwellings, the outlines of the hills upon the sky—forms to which his eyes have grown familiar as to the constellations of the skies themselves. It is the evidence of such a love of the soil which gives to much of our artist’s work its most serious charm and its truest value.

Hubert Herkomer was born in Waal, Bavaria, in 1849, so that his reputation, now of long standing, was gained in his early twenties; “The Last Muster,” his first very striking picture, and the one which obtained for him a memorable distinction at Paris, was painted at twenty-five or twenty-six. The child’s cosmopolitan experiences began early. In 1851 his father, a wood-carver of ability, settled for six

years in the United States. This is how the sad little emigration has been described:—"Accompanied by his wife—a clever music-teacher—and his child, Mr. Herkomer made his way to America, at that time considered the promised land of the *artifex*; but when he got there he found himself too far in advance of the age. Carved oak was even less appreciated in America than in Europe, and the clever artistic couple from Waal had what Americans call 'a rough time.' Hubert's mother slaved from morning till night striving to implant some music in the souls of dull girls; but the severe climate of the States proved too wearing at last, and the family, after six years' sojourn, then came to England. Mr. Herkomer was eight years old when his parents landed at Southampton and determined to settle in England. Taste had grown in the meanwhile, and a bare living could be got by artistic joiner's work and cheap music-teaching combined. At times the wanderers went back to Waal, but only to return to Southampton, where they settled down to the hard work of living and educating their son. First taught at his father's bench, young Herkomer used to help him to cook the dinner while his mother was trying to get through as many as sixteen miserably paid music-lessons in a day. When the boy could carve a little in wood, he was set to draw at the Southampton School of Art, and gained the bronze medal. Then the life of the Herkomers again shifted to Bavaria, and the young artist received invaluable instruction in drawing from the life from Professor Elcher." The father had obtained a commission for wood-carving in the city of Munich. Then followed a short five months in South Kensington—a school which, whatever its defects may be (and we have Mr. Ruskin's word that they are many), has certainly the credit of having either trained, or assisted in training, some of the foremost of the younger artists of the day. Hubert Herkomer's studies there were interrupted for a time, as he found it necessary to return to Southampton. His artistic activity, however, was unabated, for at the place of his first efforts he not only assisted in setting on foot a life-school, but organised an exhibition of the works of the young local artists, and himself enjoyed that important event of an aspirant's early years—the first sale of a picture. His intermitted studies at South Kensington were resumed in 1867, but again only for a few months, for in the following year we find him working, under grave difficulties, in the village of Hythe. In 1869 he exhibited for the first time in London, and from this date begins his London career—for he established himself in town at the same time—a career which shows an unchecked course of progress and success. The Dudley Gallery, which in those days provided so many with a friendly entrance into the public world of art, was the scene of Hubert Herkomer's first triumph—the distinction of the "place of honour," which, by the way, not even the open Dudley Gallery accorded often to an unknown name. This was in the spring of 1870, and the work thus favoured was a water-colour entitled "Hoeing." It was in water-colours, indeed, that the young artist first attracted decided attention. Having joined by invitation at about this time the Institute of Painters in Water-Colours, he exhibited in its galleries a number of drawings of considerable originality and force. They were

executed in a manner peculiar to himself, with strong outlines and audacious impressionary effects of outdoor light, having for subject little garden-scenes, fishing-scenes, and any of the more accidental passages of nature and of climate. With these were more important and more national figure-subjects, "Abendbrod," "At the Well," and "Rest," among others. He was working meanwhile in black and white, having joined the staff of the *Graphic*. In 1870 he painted in Normandy a scene of the Franco - German War, "Reading War News," and in 1873 occurred that first appearance at the Royal Academy which is one of the landmarks of every artist's life. The



"EVENTIDE." (A Scene in a Workhouse.)

leap was very sudden from these more or less tentative works to "The Last Muster" of only two years later. One water-colour, indeed, had appeared in the intervening season at the Institute—"Im Walde"—which was in a manner the herald of his great triumph; nevertheless "The Last Muster" was a surprise. The youth of the painter and the gravity of his subject, the simplicity of materials and the nobility of feeling, the unimportance, as pictures, of his previous suggestive water-colour drawings, and the impressiveness, completeness, and greatness of this sudden *chef-d'œuvre*, all combined to form a series of antitheses of peculiar interest. We are told that the Selecting Committee at the Royal Academy, though weary with a long day's work, were fresh enough at the appearance of the Pensioners to welcome the picture with a round of applause; and Sir Frederick Leighton and Mr. Richmond, among others, wrote their congratulations to the artist. It was hung on the line, and, as every one remembers, proved to be emphatically one of the pictures of its year. Its great popularity, indeed, makes it hardly necessary to remind our readers of its touching and significant subject. Heroic old age, conquered by time in spite of heroism, the veteran in whom the ashes of an old fire still smoulder, the flickering life, and the extinct face which droops in the centre of the composition—these are elements into which either easy or overstrained sentiment might readily have intruded. Mr. Herkomer's conception of his subject has been neither facile nor unreal, but simple and true. As is almost invariably the case with work of really fine quality when it has a quickly intelligible motive and intention, "The Last Muster" took the popular heart, Mr. Herkomer being one of the happy few who have touched the public emotion by obeying and not by violating the highest laws of their own art. Three years later the seal of an international verdict was set on this picture at Paris, where the jury, most truly representative of the modern taste of many races, awarded it the highest honour in their gift.

In 1876 Mr. Herkomer's Academy picture was an equally serious one—in the best sense of the term. The subject of "At Death's Door" is rather solemn than sad if looked at in the grave and sincere spirit in which the scene of actual life is acted, and in which it has also been painted. To a rude Bavarian dwelling on the cold hill-side, towards twilight, the priest has brought the sacraments from the village church; a peasant is dying within, and the tapers of the little procession are seen burning through the windows; on the stones of the mountain-path outside kneel a group of peasants, men and women, also with lights in their hands, undemonstrative in action, reserved yet purely unconscious in expression, as pathetic as Nature herself, yet with as little effort after pathos. A gayer incident of religion in the Bavarian highlands followed in the succeeding year, when Mr. Herkomer exhibited "Der Bittgang," the "Prayer-walk" of peasants through the fields in supplication for a blessing on their harvest. And in 1878 appeared "Eventide," the original of one of our engravings. Here the courageous artist deals not with heroic old age, but with old age in its most abject phase, and not with the noble poverty of peasants among their mountains, but with the unhappy pauperism of London;

and yet he has not failed to impart to the types of these old workhouse women a certain dignity which the eye of the thoughtful and worthy artist sees in all human things, and which his hand is able to liberate. The actions in this picture are particularly good, especially the movement of the old woman in profile who is gropingly—and with indirect touch—searching for her needle, and that of the other in full-face who is watching her. These are passages of real nature closely observed. To the Grosvenor Gallery, as well as to the Academy, Mr. Herkomer industriously contributes, and among his works there exhibited was the “Life, Light, and Melody,” a Bavarian village scene, which we engrave; a portrait of Richard Wagner, the compatriot and friend of the artist, who is himself an accomplished musical amateur; “Who Comes Here?” a strikingly vivid study of expression; “Words of Comfort;” the well-known portrait of Lord Tennyson; “A Descendant of the Romans;” the portrait of Mr. Ruskin, which ranks among the noblest of his works; the portraits of Herr Joachim, of Dr. Garrod, of Mr. C. Villiers Stanford (a very life-like and direct presentment of the young musician, full-face, with his hands in his pockets), and of Mrs. Stanford—to mention the best out of many.

The series of landscapes began in 1880 with a work of great grandeur and beauty—“God’s Shrine.” The kind of power shown here took by surprise even those who knew Mr. Herkomer at his best. The dark, shadowy valley in the Bavarian mountains has a lonely road, winding patiently along the sides of the lower heights. And in the near foreground, by the wayside, stands, for the prayers of the rare passer-by, a little shrine with its projecting roof. A fold of middle-distance hills is clad in sombre firs, but, far above, the mountain summits soar into golden and rosy lights, with illumined clouds. It is throughout rich in noble qualities of execution, and, as an imaginative landscape, stands almost alone amongst the work now produced or exhibited in England. Almost equally fine in all artistic excellence is “Wind-Swept,” another mountain landscape, representing also a complete solitude, but without the pathetic sign of human feeling. A very good Welsh mountain subject was exhibited at the Grosvenor a little later. In 1881 the artist’s principal picture was “Missing,” a scene at Portsmouth Dockyard gates during the long suspense, before all hope was given up as to the fate of the lost *Eurydice*. There is a crowd of enquirers at the gate, upon which “no news” is proclaimed. The painter has given some invention to the expression of varied and tumultuous emotion, with fair success. But there is a rather disagreeable air of falling about in the composition, increased by an unfortunate sloping post in the foreground. In 1882 another Welsh landscape, “Homeward,” was at the Academy, with several portraits of fine quality, including a vigorous and felicitous likeness of Archibald Forbes in working dress; and portraits of Dr. Thompson, the Master of Trinity, and of Mr. Wynne, a “sitter” to whom Mr. Herkomer was much attached, and who died before the picture was exhibited. A very clever, though rather careless, subject-picture was at the Academy in 1883—“Natural Enemies,” a quarrel among Bavarian peasants in a beershop.

But about this time Mr. Herkomer's growing reputation as a portrait-painter brought him some almost overwhelming work. During a trip to the United States he was turned into a kind of portrait-painting machine, and his art suffered temporarily



LIFE, LIGHT, AND MELODY.
(By Permission of Mr. A. W. Mousel Lewis.)

even after his return. With five portraits to be worked on every day—a task which befell him at Boston—it was impossible to see more than the accidental aspects of his subjects, and it is curious to observe how much Mr. Herkomer's technique suffered

from these restrictions of his knowledge of his sitters. If, however, portraits had somewhat damaged him, it was a portrait by which, in 1885, he more than retrieved himself. His "Miss Katherine Grant" will long be remembered as a work of exceptional power, wonderfully effective, yet making its effect by a thorough method, completely carried through. The lady, whose vivid, dark eyes are beautifully and luminously painted, and whose hair is also dark, is in white, against a white background, her long light-grey gloves being the only other deeper accent. The whole is so truly and delicately valued that flesh, drapery, and background are relieved strongly and brilliantly. To the same Academy Mr. Herkomer contributed "Hard Times," a landscape with important figures—a group of tired-out English tramps by a road-side; and "Found," a noble Welsh mountain-scene, to which the painter attached some curious lines of poetry; two little figures represent a wounded Roman warrior succoured by a wild British goatherdess. To the Grosvenor he sent "The First Warmth of Spring," a study of a rocky hill-side, with the bare twigs of a tree wearing that lively sappy look which prefaces budding. Mr. Herkomer was entirely absent from the great exhibitions in 1886. It was while engaged in hanging a charming series of mountain and peasant sketches in the Fine Art Society's rooms that he received the tidings of the terribly sudden bereavement which has left him for the second time a widower.

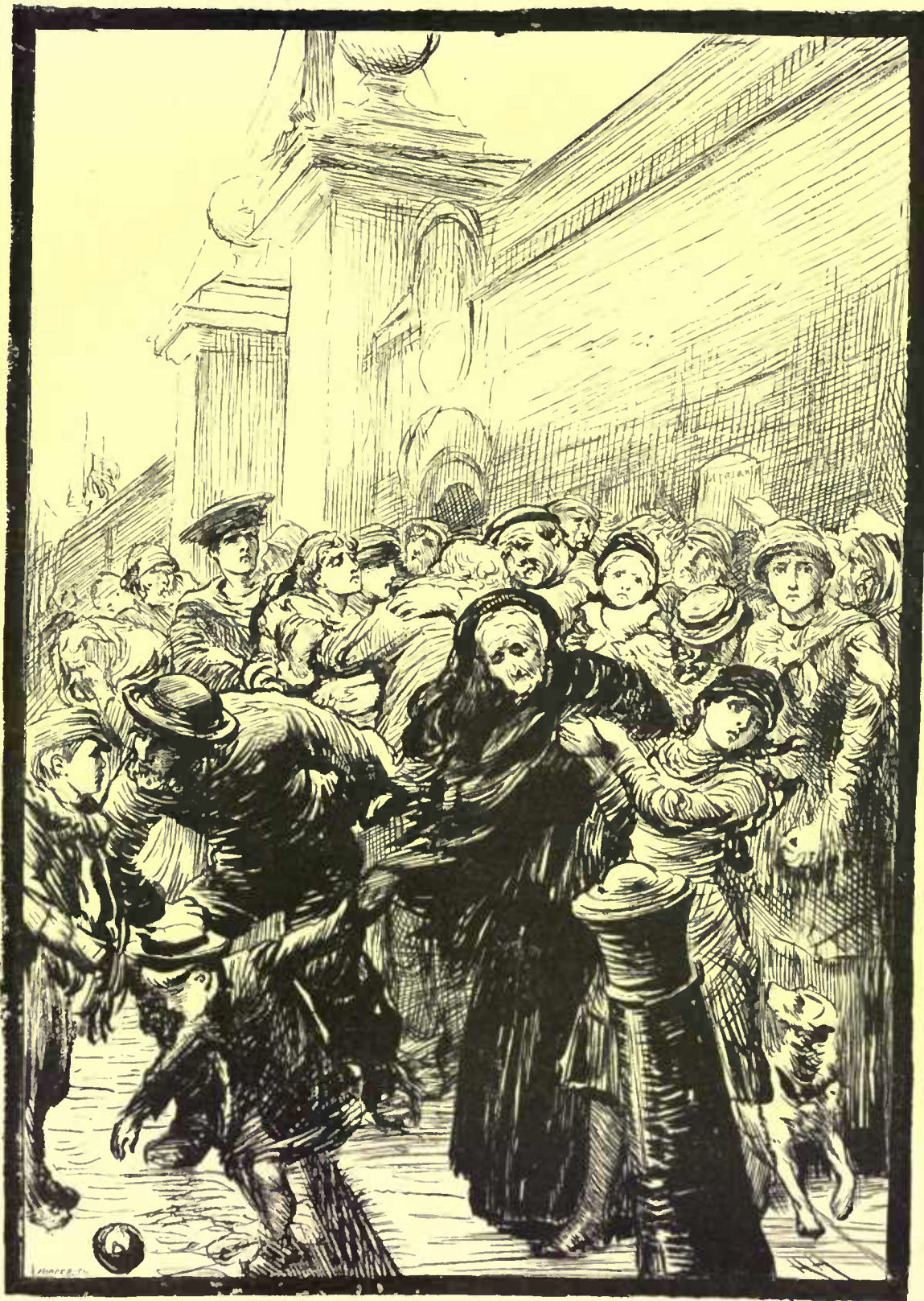
Mr. Herkomer has given proof of his desire that art should be found in the most modern matters of our present world by gladly taking up the project of beautiful advertising, which made so good a beginning in the great *Magazine of Art* poster. Other artists, no more sensitive than he, give up the advertising world as something hopeless, and try to walk the streets without seeing the walls and hoardings. But Mr. Herkomer, recognising that advertising is evidently a condition of the present order, and holding that no necessary thing should necessarily be vulgar and bad, would be willing to make designs to advertise things less æsthetic than the *Magazine of Art*—if only the vendors of the other things could feel the need of artistic posters! His design is beautiful, and striking in its gracefulness. The idea is an allegory, simple enough to be intelligible to the wayfarer willing to pause and look for a moment. On the steps of the temple of Art stands the Genius, genial and generous, with her ready crown in her hands. On either side of the temple porch are groups of the great painters of the older and the modern schools. In the foreground a mother turns her children's eyes towards the beauty of art, and a young student and a working man stand, the one opening his whole life, the other the moment of his leisure, to the inspiration of genius. For a time this charming design was to be seen in city and suburb; then its day went by. The example was a good one, but, alas! it was fruitless. The day has evidently not come for a reform of the advertising industry.

Mr. Herkomer was represented at the Paris International Exhibition, in 1878, by water-colours and etchings, as well as by paintings. To the art of etching, indeed, he has devoted time, thought, and labour, with good results. While avoiding

the perhaps too stenographic note-taking of the modern French school, he has preserved that principle which is the genius of the art—the principle of interpretation as opposed to imitation; his needle expresses his subject and his own feeling with the fine sympathy which no other instrument probably can so sensitively secure. And he has learned to express himself not only by the needle, but also by the burin; a picture from his hand, and the artist's own engraving of it, have been exhibited in the Academy together. His faithful life of strenuous effort in difficulties, and of sensitive feeling in keen sorrows and joys, cannot fail to give its true stamp to his art.

Mr. Herkomer was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy in the spring of 1879. He is also a member of the Vienna Imperial Academy of Art, of the Brussels Institute of Water-Colours, of the Liverpool Institute, and of the Royal Society of Water-Colour Painters at the Hague. Thus the different and rival schools of several nations have already adopted him, but England claims him as her permanent guest.

The kind of selfless love of art and the hopefulness and helpfulness for others which are Mr. Herkomer's most charming qualities, have led to the institution of an Art-school which should supply some of the enormous wants of English students. Its aim and conditions have been well sketched by a writer in the *Guardian*, who says:—"It is a serious undertaking, the outcome of a generous energy of no ordinary kind, executed with great practical ability, and rich in promise of good work. As so often happens, the opportunity fell accidentally on material which had been gathered and stored for many years of patient labour and varied experience. One of Mr. Herkomer's nearest neighbours at Bushey, Mr. Eccleston Gibb, has built on his own ground an Art-school for students of both sexes, under the immediate direction and absolute control of the artist, who gives his services as a labour of love. The students are selected from those who, having made considerable progress in their education, have at last reached the stage of painting from the nude figure. Out of more than a hundred applicants, thirty-four were selected as a beginning. There are three studios, of which the male and female students in turn have the use. Two of these are noble rooms of great height and space, with vast windows to the south, scarcely interrupted by any frame, admitting continuous light, as well as windows in the roof. These are for drawing from the life model. One is handsomely fitted on the north wall with old oak, panels of the same running round the room, and numerous desks with lockers arranged for students. The third, a smaller room, has a clever arrangement of windows in an apsidal form down to the ground, with glass above, so that the model may be drawn, if desired, in pure sunshine. The ventilation of these rooms seems to be excellent." With what considerate practical thought the mechanism of the matter has been arranged may be gathered from the fact that the possible poverty of students has been consulted in every detail of supply. The studios lead out of a corridor into which open an office for the sale of artists' materials at a reduced price, and a room fitted with large locked pigeon-holes for the safe bestowal of studies in progress, each student keeping the key of his own. Besides these conveniences,



"MISSING."

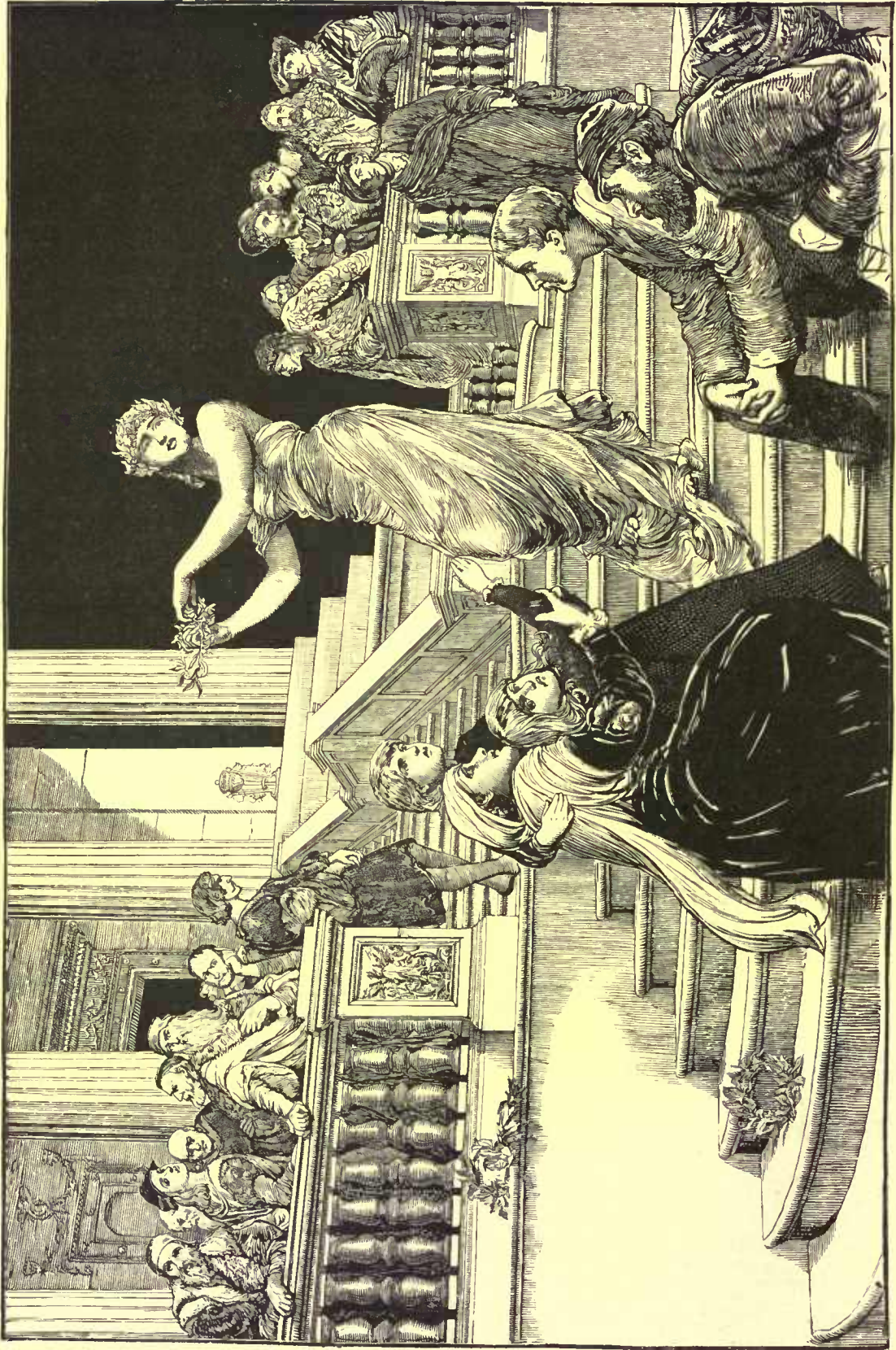
Mr. Gibb has spared no expense in erecting kitchens and refreshment rooms where those who desire it can have suitable food at a low price. And another point is specially to be noted. "Provision is made," as the same writer proceeds, "for the residence of the porter, with kitchen and offices separate from the rest; and this officer and his wife will take care of the models, both men and women, who will be provided with beds for the whole week from Monday to Saturday without cost, and have the privilege of getting their food on the premises at a moderate expense. This provision for a class of persons, who of all those recognised by society as a necessary appendage to art are the most ambiguous and awkward to deal with, is an item in this school which is to be highly commended, and possibly may call more attention to the whole question of models. A secretary is on the spot to superintend the ventilation, lighting, and offices, which are under his supervision and control. The students live in lodgings in the little village of Bushey (the ladies having the first choice), and in the neighbourhood. Some parents arrange to keep house for their daughters."

Mr. Herkomer has given careful consideration to his time-table, which is evidently intended for workers and not for triflers. "The programme does not seem to be above the ordinary tension of wholesome study, though it is severe enough to find out the weak muscle and the feeble will. Mr. Herkomer puts no footstool under the heel of indolence that plays at work. His students must draw and paint *standing*, with free play of the elbow—he believes in setting to, not in sitting at, your work. He aims at giving every one his fair share of opportunity and privilege, and has adapted his rule of student life with an eye to strictness in principle and liberty in detail. He also believes much in the education of young artists by one another; and, having started them on a true system, leaves them very much to themselves and to each other. For instance, on Monday the students assemble in their respective studios. Taking them alphabetically, it is arranged that the first comer shall pose the model, and, having chosen his position and the light and shade, he puts it to the show of hands whether the posture is accepted by the class. If a majority be against him, he tries again. And when the show of hands has decided in his favour they work at the model in that pose from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., with the interval of half an hour for luncheon. In the course of Monday they must lay in the whole figure in colour to avoid niggling, and to get breadth and liberty of hand. On Tuesday they return to the same spot, and do a small pencil sketch of the same figure, as a criterion of accuracy and a corrective of faults in the first drawing. In the afternoon of that day they go on with the same drawing. On Wednesday they paint all day at this figure, and again on Thursday till 1 p.m., at which hour the model is posed in three or four positions, with light gauze drapery. Friday is allotted to painting on the first drawing; but on Saturday morning all the students, men and women, come together for a head study from the living model. The night work, which we believe is at the student's discretion, is limited to *drawing* from 7 to 9 p.m., at which hours *painting* is forbidden. One night of the week is given

to quick sketching of the model in two positions, and for these exercises three hours are allotted. It should be added that to the female students a nude female model is allowed." Thus Mr. Herkomer has not adopted the curious, nay mystical rules by which in our Government schools study from the female model is allowed to a motley mob of boys and men and forbidden to young women.

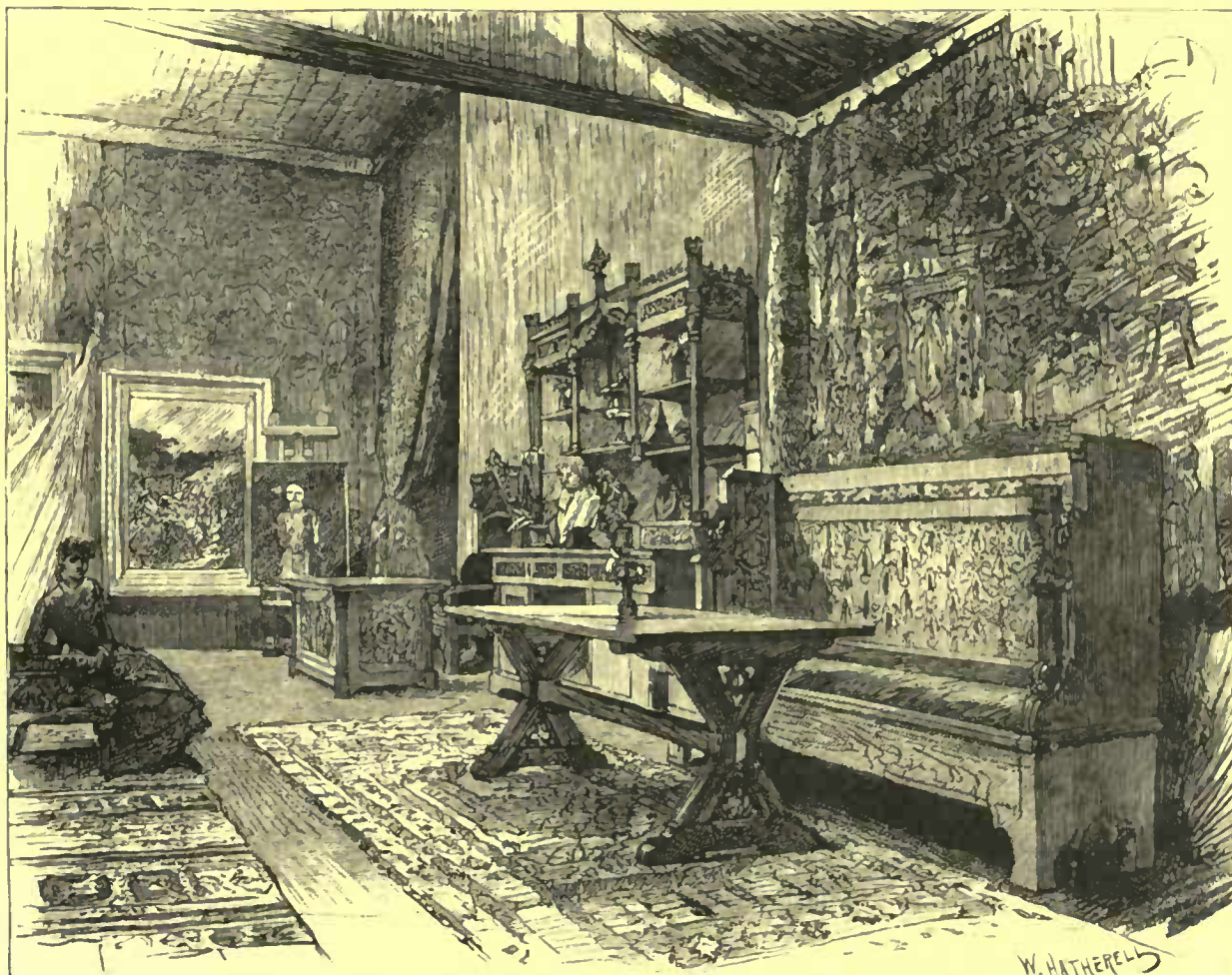
To proceed: "Mr. Herkomer trusts to the thoroughness of the system laid down to fulfil his intentions with as little of his own personal interference as possible. He is accessible to the pupils at all times, and may be seen by them at his work; but there is no egotism about him; he does not propose his own drawings for their study, nor is he, as a rule, continually overlooking their work; indeed, with the pressure of hard labour in his own life this would be impossible. His pupils have the inestimable benefit of working beside an artist who is improving and developing, if not making, his reputation—certainly not making his money and taking liberties for his own ease, as so many do who have made their reputation and now are making money. He is a man of remarkable energy and as remarkable versatility, with a play of imagination that quickens the eye to see and the hand to create; so that, like the Greek, he does not rest till he has expressed his thought in some plastic material, soft as clay or chalk, or paint, or hard as wood or stone, or iron, or silver, or steel. His frugal home, with its beautiful adornments, recalls the artist life of the great Italians of the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries, when Giotto and Orcagna were architects and sculptors as well as painters, and Francia worked in gold, and, later on, Leonardo comprehended not only all the fine arts but many sciences in his own mighty brain. The visitor will see the master's hand in landscape gardening, wood-carving, ornamental ironwork, modelling in silver, engraving, etching, modelling in clay, architectural plans, as well as portrait-painting; and all this the product of a few years of early manhood, within the compass of a small and, but for the singular wealth of art wrought on the premises, what may justly be called a thoroughly English home. The contagious inspiration which will pass to the students cannot fail to produce great results. And in their master they will find a man of sterling powers of work, not bred in kings' houses, but one who has endured hardness and is chastened by experience, and now, with the mature confidence of a happy manhood and the genial influence of prosperity, gives scope to his delight in domestic charities by a generous outlay of unpaid labour in forwarding the honourable ambition of a younger generation of English artists."

It should be added to this account that Mr. Herkomer by no means desires that his students should be confined to painting. It was an ill day for Europe when the arts and the handicrafts were divorced, and separated into "fine art" and "labour." Thoughtful as well as artistic men have keenly desired that they should come together again in their old intimate conjunction, with all its degrees of dignity. At Bushey they are inseparable, and the Bushey students learn to keep them so. It not unfrequently happens in life that a man with a marked artistic



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temperament fails in "art" because he has limited his hopes and his attempts to one of the only three "arts" he recognises—painting, sculpture, or architecture; whereas nature intended him to be eminent and happy as a wood-carver, or a hammerer of iron, or a silversmith. Mr. Herkomer gives his opinion—and he has a most rapid and sympathetic eye for artistic "diagnosis"—on the capacity of a



MR. HERKOMER'S HOUSE: THE STUDIO.

student, and his advice saves many a one from a lifelong mistake. His whole desire is that the work done shall be the best possible, the best of which the student is capable, and in such excellence alone can young learners hope to find happiness in their profession. Humility and truth—two great theological virtues—are as necessary to their art as to their moral natures.

As regards the kind of teaching which prevails at Bushey, it may be described as pausing between the too great liberty of English method—or no-method—and the too great discipline of the French manner. Mr. Herkomer is not altogether an advocate of the French studio system, for he believes strongly in the individuality



THE DRAWING-ROOM.

of the student. He deems it important that the learner should "find his own identity," and yet should not lose time by unguided searching and experiments. Nor, apparently, does he rejoice to see the young talent of England under strong French influence, for he considers English characteristics worth preserving. Mr. Herkomer has decided that in no case the teaching at Bushey shall be quite gratuitous, for he has observed that all young men and women who have consciences are preserved against temptation to idleness by the thought that their friends have paid something for them, and thus have given a hostage into the keeping of their honour. Nevertheless, the fees are so apportioned as not to be profitable.

Nowadays, in our self-conscious times, artists are apt to speak of the mission of their art with a solemnity which is somewhat dubious. The average

painter is a person who knows how to make the best of both worlds—by which we mean not so much the terrestrial and celestial spheres of the theologian, as the two worlds of the real and the ideal. Why, then, is he beguiled into using the language of a kind of apostle

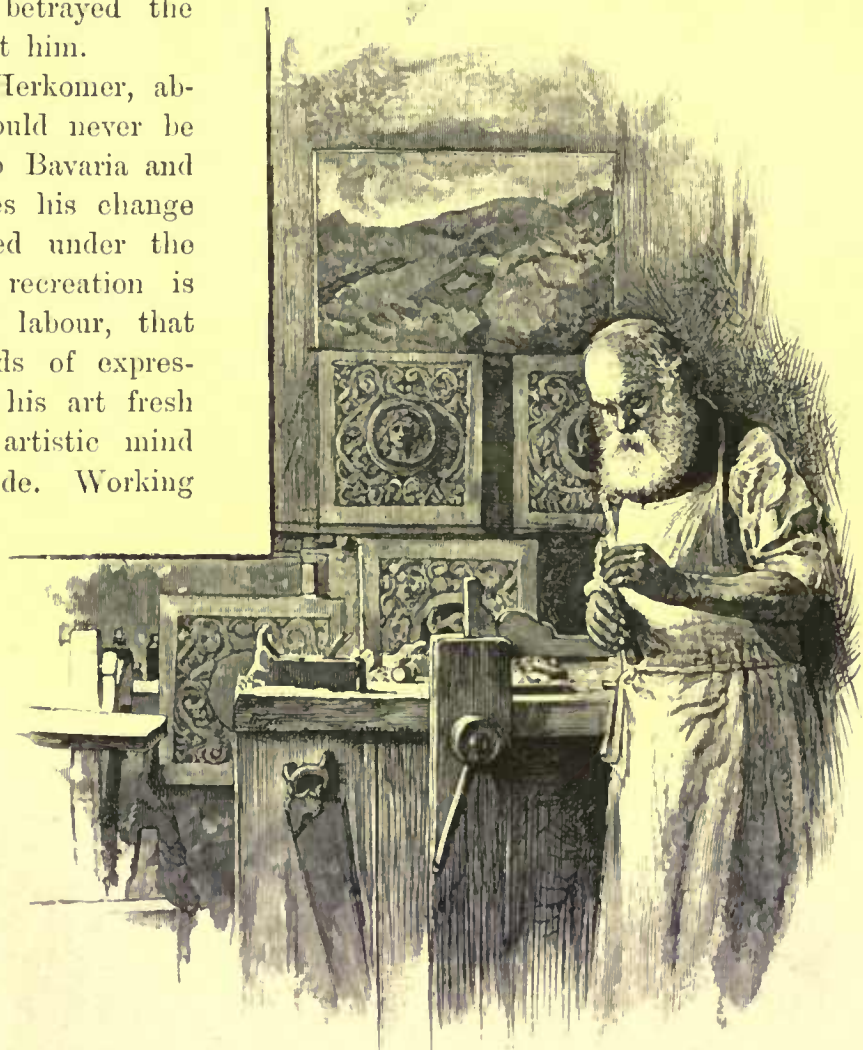
of the æsthetic? That the character sits strangely upon him is evident from the fact that he makes no sacrifice for his priesthood. His eye and his heart should be constantly under the training of nature; but he lives in a town, and in a town where even the primitive things of nature—the light, the air, the shadows, the clouds and stars—are spoilt. We confess that we should be pleased to see more artists living away from London—in the clear air: whether they breathe it in the countries of the great art of which they are fond of talking, or among the peasants

they are fond of painting, or in some English village where the dust is pure of coal, and the shadows are dark with atmosphere and not with soot, and the sunset is lurid with cloud and not with smoke. At least, if a painter chooses London, he should do so simply, and not in the character of an apostle. He can "live beautifully" in town, but there is undoubtedly a better part; for London life is hardly possible without such social distractions as are inconsistent with singleness of heart and anything like constant application. Hubert Herkomer is evidently one of the few who consider the light of heaven worth the London season. To him a two months' holiday in the decline of the year's loveliness and at the fag end of ten months of streets and squares is no proof of such a passion for Nature as earns that favour and that constancy of hers—

"Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her."

The man from whose golden poems that fervent verse is taken gave constancy for constancy, and never betrayed the Nature who betrayed not him.

But then, to Mr. Herkomer, absence from his work would never be a holiday. He goes to Bavaria and to Wales to paint, takes his change of air in a tent pitched under the rocks; and his daily recreation is only that variation of labour, that alteration of his methods of expression, which, by giving his art fresh instruments, rests the artistic mind fatigued with one attitude. Working with the brush, the water-colour pencil, the engraver's burin, the etcher's point—for each of these tools he must assume different powers, subject himself to different limitations, and order his thoughts in a different system of representation. Not his medium of expression only, but



STUDIO OF MR. HERKOMER, SEN.

his subject also he changes, passing from the composition of an imaginative group to the study of one face in the repose of portraiture, or to that of nature in mountain and sky. He probably finds more rest and recreation among the methods and manners, the powers and restrictions, of mezzotint, line, and colour than another might enjoy in the game of politics relieved by fox-hunting and shooting and angling. He has placed himself away from town so that his time and thoughts may be undivided, yet near enough to be within easy reach of exhibitions, friends, sitters, and the music which he loves second only to his own art.

The approaches to Bushey are not particularly attractive. London dies away in a different manner in all her suburbs, and perhaps nowhere more slowly, more flatly, with a more persistent lingering of the scraps and shreds of her industries, her coal and brick, than on the side of Willesden Junction. That great wilderness and tangle of lines passed, things assume a more rural aspect. Still there is nothing exactly lovely in the neighbourhood. Bushey itself is dominated by a high-level railroad upon its dreary arches; but the village is not a bad village, and looks as peaceful as if it were deep in Arcadia. At the end of the little still street, with a small commonplace garden in front, stand the two joined cottages of which Mr. Herkomer has made his house—by name Dyreham. The building is unnoticeable, and has been left, as regards its outer form, just as the tenant found it. Within, the distribution of the rooms has been little altered, except by the intercommunication of the two cottages. A small drawing-room on the left and a small dining-room on the right, a still smaller servants' hall, and a very attractive series of bright little kitchens and offices, on the ground floor, have eleven tiny bedrooms above. But if the shell of the house is ordinary, far other is the interior. In a little vine-grown workshop at the back is made the whole of the furniture—sideboards, cabinets, and chairs, designed in the purest Gothic taste, and finished with the finest labour of hand and tool. Of the work and the workman we shall have more to say hereafter. The Herkomer household is not obtrusively æsthetic; yet there are few members of the *cultus* who would not consider Mr. Herkomer's chairs as treasures, while the familiar design and colour of a favourite Morris paper—the fruit pattern printed over the old willow leaf—are the first things to be observed in the dining-room. The ordinary plaster ceilings, too, have been everywhere replaced with oaken beams, generally divided by lines of colour, to carry out the tints of wall or dado; and the high brass fender, dear to the man of taste, stands before every fireplace. There is certainly no affectation anywhere; but if this thoroughness of workmanship, this purity of design, and this low harmony of colour are Philistine, then by all means let Philistinism flourish and increase.

In the drawing-room are two elaborate cabinets of oak. One of them has a lovely series of the seasons painted by Mr. Herkomer in its panels—single figures, full of grace and freshness; and there are spots of good colour in pottery, china, and fans upon their shelves. Flowers, daintily harmonising with the jar of old crackle or other fine-toned porcelain in which they stand, bloom everywhere; and

in a corner stands a spinning-wheel, such as the mother of Mr. Herkomer's mother may have sung to in her Bavarian home. The chimneypieces are surmounted by a facing of blue-and-white tiles, with china on the shelves; and very close to the upper shelf comes the low oak ceiling, with its lines of colour. Conspicuous in the dining-room are the portraits of the painter's father and mother, and these are in his eyes the most precious possessions in the house. The one is a memorial of a face that has passed away, but the original of the other is present as the patriarch of the household. In the decorative colours of the simple walls a particularly happy effect is to be noted: one of the little upper chambers being furnished with a light-blue Japanese leather-paper—that one which is well known to the lovers of such things, and in which some small designs and lines of gold are mingled. The room is dadoed with wood painted blue to match, the ceiling having the same blue between the beams. Another of the little group of rooms is arranged for the same paper with yellow paint, to accord with the gold in it. Much blue is used in the upper storey, this most difficult of colours, with which no "decorator" can be trusted, being in every instance prepared by Mr. Herkomer himself. Indeed, there are everywhere signs that the artist has that wholesome share of the workman's nature with which a painter cannot (though a writer may easily) dispense.



THE DINING-ROOM.

The studio is the heart of Dyreham. It is built out at the back—a tall roomy structure, with a group of outbuildings in the rear. A path through a little space of garden leads to its door. Within, everything speaks of work; for though there is no lack of decoration, the hands of the father and son are seen in it all. The easels stand at the further end. The high walls are hung all over with materials of a greenish colour and quiet design. The Gothic oaken tables, the cabinets, the seats of every shape and kind, including a noble chair with steps and a dais—these are all from one industrious hand. Among them is a carved bench, which is a relic of other times, and still bears the direction written upon its back, when it was sent as a present to the young student in London by his father. "We can afford better wood now," says the artist, with a backward glance at more difficult days. Mr. Hubert Herkomer himself has undertaken the decoration of the mantelpiece, which is to

be surmounted, up to the roof, with metal work—copper, brass, silver, and iron, chiselled and hammered by his own hand in designs of decorative figures. The metal is applied in plaques upon the flat wall. A bust of Mr. Herkomer stands on the cabinet to the right. At the far end of the studio is a recess, in which will some day be built an organ; the zither, meanwhile, is his favourite musical instrument. In recesses at the back, too, are the artist's store of books, with mysterious places for the stowage of his canvases, and shelves upon which, for the study of form, are ranged plaster casts of famous heads. About the middle of the studio, just under a skylight, stands Mr. Herkomer's etching-table beneath its canopy of ground glass, with neat drawers as full of instruments as the terrible shallow drawers you shudder at in a dentist's room. Everything is in perfect and perpetual order; and yet this pleasantest of *ateliers* looks as though it was the scene of family life as well as of artistic labour. Signs of the painter's work are mixed with signs of

the leisure of others: a bit of art-embroidery lies half-finished on a table, and a sleek cat nurses two blue-eyed kittens before the fire.

Through the further door of the studio the garden is reached, a rather utilitarian garden,

blooming with apple blossoms, and showing an unusual array—rows of whitened canvases drying in the air. Here stand the hut and the tent which Mr. Herkomer and his family have used for camping out in Wales: both models of clever practical contrivance, which have stood the strain of hurricanes without the failing of a rope or a peg. When in working order, the hut and tent are fitted with hammocks for beds, and with a hundred space-saving appliances. Life in camp is of course life out of doors; but a shelter must be in readiness in case of bad weather. The painting-hut is fitted with a camera, and also with a large plate-glass window and every necessary



A CORNER OF THE DRAWING-ROOM.

arrangement of skylight. Ranged along the back of the studio and house are the auxiliary workshops of this multifarious art-factory. Foremost in interest is the bright room, with its flower-surrounded windows, where Mr. Herkomer, senior, labours at his oak carving, turning, and joining. It is impossible to note without interest the affectionate and filial care with which the hardship of the past is made amends for now. The venerable artist-workman is happy in the enjoyment of the finest materials, the finest tools, that heart could desire. But his simple, or rather ascetic, habits have not changed; the teetotallers, and those very thorough vegetarians who deny themselves even the use of fish, may boast of him as a fine exemplar of their doctrines. Like his son, he speaks English admirably, and is a diligent student of English literature after working hours. And working hours with him are invariable; no artisan called by the stroke of a bell which must be obeyed is more punctual to his task than he.

Close to the wood-carving workshop is the printing-room. Here several men are at work producing impressions from Mr. Herkomer's mezzotints and etchings. We see a splendid press roll smoothly round, and a print of Mr. Millais' portrait of Lord Beaconsfield lifted out. A proof of the same artist's "Caller Herrin'," which Mr. Herkomer has also engraved, stands near; he speaks with enthusiasm of the head, which he considers as fine as anything the master has ever painted. "In doing this work," he adds, "I am nothing but a copyist. The art is to render what you see in the picture, and not what you fancy you would like to see." In the same manner, he explains the sympathy and the respect and appreciation which are so striking in his best portraits; "I am *fond* of my sitters, and I am fond of them exactly as they are, and not as I imagine them to be, or would like them to be." He asserts that even affectation, the most disagreeable of human characteristics, cannot keep away the artist's liking, but that he has become fond of even an affected sitter.

Passing into a more commodious house than the low cottages of Dyreham, the Herkomer household will always keep their simple and laborious habits. That indefatigable interest which, as we have seen, the artist is in the habit of importing into the practice of his art, and which has made him eager to excel in every method of expression in turn, he also imports into the concerns of his everyday existence and the facts and accidents of his surroundings. His theory of life is the very opposite of that contained in the French aphorism which insists upon it that "*le mieux est l'ennemi du bien*." He is never content to let well alone, but is always



THE PRINTING-ROOM.

seeking for the better. He changes, he shifts, he revises and redecorates and rearranges; so that his environment has the attribute of an endless variety of aspect, and its circumstances seem gifted with an innate and peculiar capacity of metamorphosis. What is more to the purpose is, that the capacity is never at fault, but that the result of its exercise is always ingenious and impressive. It would be well, indeed, if everybody's surroundings were as happily inspired. But that is, of course, impossible. The instinct of fitness, the knack of consummate arrangement, the faculty of *ordonnance* in colour, and of combination in line, are integral parts of the artistic capacity, and are no more to be acquired through study—though study will go far to educate and develop them—than the incommunicable quality of genius itself.





Richd. Fildes
Mr. Fildes.

LUKE FILDES, A.R.A.



WHEN Charles Dickens selected Mr. Luke Fildes to be the illustrator of the never-completed "Edwin Drood," the great novelist was only giving another instance of the marvellous insight he possessed into character. He saw at a glance, doubtless, that in our present subject he would find a genius that jumped precisely with his own. That he was right must be evident

to all who have any knowledge of Mr. Fildes' work. The dramatic realism, the power of close observation of simple but telling details, the intimate acquaintance with the motives, feelings, and emotions stirring the heart of everyday common life, which it displays, are in the very spirit of Dickens; and in the course of this brief sketch reference will be made to an anecdote fully confirmatory of our words. Admitting, for the moment, that they are justified by what the public know of our artist's ability as a draughtsman on wood, no less than as a painter on canvas, and looking back from the eminence to which he has attained, one hardly expects to see him at the outset of his career stirred by no loftier ambition than that of becoming an ornamental designer, as it is called, or at the most a designer of stained glass. Yet this was so, chiefly because in this comparatively mechanical line of art he probably saw the only loophole for the time being by which he could evade those commercial pursuits to which he was destined by his friends; for, born on the 14th of October, 1844, in the midst of a business community, he avers that, as far as he can look back, his ancestry were entirely devoid of artistic instincts. Thus we find him making a compromise by diligently sticking to his general education in the day, so long as he was allowed to attend the School of Design in the evening at Chester, the city in which he was brought up, though Liverpool was his actual birthplace. In his seventeenth year, however, the sacred spark within him began to glow, and the strong inclination which had always possessed him for watching nature, animate and inanimate, in a solitary, absent, mooning sort of fashion, grew so confirmed, that, looked upon by his friends at last as a hopeless dreamer, he was permitted to make his choice of a career.

Discontented with the narrow round of mechanical work afforded by the Chester school, he, now that he was free, sought one founded on a wider basis, then lately established at Warrington. Still, this did not yield sufficient scope and verge for the aspirations now developing in the young artist. Designing patterns for oil-cloth, wall-papers, &c., which was, as at Chester, the principal study followed at the Warrington school, was not likely to satisfy the heart and brain of a lad capable, eventually, of imagining and carrying out "The Casuals" and "The Widower." So, after two years more of ornamental designing, he came to London, and in 1863, at the age of nineteen, attached himself to the South Kensington Schools. Labouring diligently thenceforth, with the purpose of lifting himself into a higher position, he, by the time 1866 came round, succeeded in getting himself admitted a student of the Royal Academy; and as he kept himself going while in London chiefly by wood-drawing, it can easily be understood that this branch of his profession by degrees opened up to him a fairly remunerative occupation. The editors of many of the monthly magazines, when they got an inkling of the stuff that was in him, were only too glad to attach him to their staffs, and it would be amusing and encouraging to young aspirants were there space to recount some of the anecdotes he tells of the humble estimate he held in those days of the worth

of his work. Somewhere about the early part of 1869 it was that he entered into an engagement with Dickens, through Messrs. Chapman and Hall, to illustrate "Edwin Drood," and this led to that close intimacy between artist and author which would have ripened into an affectionate friendship had it not been cut short all too soon by the lamented death of the latter. Very interesting is it to listen to Mr. Fildes' account of their interviews and consultations. The twelve drawings for the new book gave the most unqualified satisfaction to its writer—as well they might. At the end of this same year, too, it was that the first number of the *Graphic* appeared, and its first page at once riveted the attention of all good judges of art, for on it figured conspicuously "The Casuals," the drawing which, five years later, was destined to be developed into the picture which established Mr. Fildes' reputation as an artist of the highest promise. Meanwhile, Dickens never lived to see the triumph of his young colleague, but most of us can remember how appropriately, but painfully, the association of the two was carried on, as it were, for a time, by the large wood-drawing which the artist made of the study at Gad's Hill, and which he called "The Empty Chair."

While thus pursuing his work on the illustrated paper, and ever claiming increased attention by his successive productions in it, such as the page engravings of "The Dead Napoleon," "The Bashful Model," &c., our artist was earnestly striving to master the technique of oil-colour. Hitherto, except through a few modest water-colour drawings (mostly landscapes) exhibited at the Dudley Gallery and elsewhere, no one knew him except by his work in black and white, but in 1872 he rather astonished those who had only thus known of him by exhibiting at the Royal Academy his first oil picture, entitled "Fair Quiet, and Sweet Rest." This Watteau-like water party was followed in the next year by a smaller canvas in a somewhat similar key called "Simpletons." Scoring fairly, they nevertheless did not promise to lead to such a performance as that which in the year 1874 drove home and clenched the reputation the Lancashire lad had by degrees been winning.

There was no doubt about "Applicants for Admission to a Casual Ward." Whatever the work lacked in mere executive skill—and it was reasonable that there should be some evidence of a hand not entirely at home with the new medium—was more than atoned for by the power which it displayed, that power to which we venture to refer as Dickensian; and here is the confirmatory anecdote. Mr. John Forster, while this picture was in progress, was writing the life of Dickens, and it happened at the same time that he had some intercourse with Mr. Fildes. One day the painter was telling the biographer about the work he was engaged on, when the latter produced a letter from his deceased friend in which occurred a passage describing some "casuals" as Dickens had seen them somewhere "down Whitechapel way."

"Why!" cried Mr. Fildes, "those words absolutely represent my subject. May I quote them?"

"Assuredly," was the answer; "they will be public property by the time your picture is before the world."

Thus it was that in the catalogue we found against our artist's canvas the pungent and appropriate lines—"Dumb, wet, silent horrors, Sphinxes set up against that dead wall, and none likely to be at the pains of solving them until the *general overthrow*."

Upon this, people concluded that the picture had been suggested by the biography, and that, tempted by his success with "Edwin Drood," the artist was



FAIR QUIET, AND SWEET REST.

(By Permission of the Proprietors of "The Graphic.")

further displaying his aptitude for illustrating his author. Whereas the circumstance only showed how the two minds, independently of each other, had been similarly impressed by the same terrible spectacle. We have spoken of "The Casuals" as a work of promise, and the phrase may seem cold for the description of a picture so successful—a picture which would probably have made the sensation of the year had not all other sensations been overpowered by the popular *furor* which during all that season crowded the corner where the "Roll-Call" was guarded by its policeman. But brilliantly clever as "The Casuals" is, it has some touches of a man who is not altogether emancipated from the conventionalities that hamper youth. Bold as the attempt at realism is here, yet the artisan's wife weeping, and the widow in the foreground with her baby, are rather what the public expected of Mr. Fildes than what Mr. Fildes *quite* saw. And this slight conventionality, only accidental in his work, but the very essence and bulk of many another popular painter, lasted through what may be called the sentimental phase of Mr. Fildes' career.

Marrying, soon after the production of this picture, a lady whose name has honourably figured in more than one Royal Academy catalogue as that of a delicate and able painter of *genre*, Mr. Fildes paid a lengthened visit to Paris, where he was not closely engaged at work on the easel. Parisian influence, nevertheless, had its marked effect, for his next picture was not a sentimental or subject-picture at all, but a study in the best and highest sense—a presentment of a figure in full daylight, which had some of the singularly brilliant quality of the painter's much later work. This was the charming "Betty" of 1875, the popular picture of the "fair



THE CASUALS.
(By permission of Thomas Taylor, Esq., of Aston Rowant.)

and honest milkmaid" who goes through the dew to her cows with a handful of flowers tossed into her milking-pail. We have said it is not a subject-picture, but there proved to be subject enough to take the public fancy greatly. Reproduced

in colours by the *Graphic* (and far better than such things are generally done), "Betty" took her place in thousands of nurseries and cottages up and down and across England. To artists and critics it was evident that Mr. Fildes had made enormous progress, his brushwork was so accomplished, his illumination so fine. The figure is bright against a bright sky, but the one brightness seems rather to enhance the other.

Nevertheless, "Betty" proved to be but a specimen of future things. For the painter, perceiving evidently a "divided duty," and quite unable to decide whether he should devote himself to execution and lighting and technical excellence, or whether he should yield to his strongly dramatic bent, and paint emotions, followed the latter course for a time, and produced "The Widower." The subject is certainly intensely pathetic. This homely and tender labourer, who has lifted his suffering child from her bed, and who, in his ignorance and helplessness as to what he should do for her, raises her hot fingers to his trembling lips, is suffering bereavement in its most cruel form, when bereavement means not only separation, but the bitter loss and deprivation of all the necessities of the heart. She who would have comforted his bewildered affection, and cherished the sick child, and tended the little ones who are running wild at their play, and given confidence and hope to the poor elder girl who has prepared the father's dinner and looks on in her poignant young anxiety—she is buried away, away from hearing, away from help; her hands are idle; "there is no room for any work in the close clay;" the beings for whom she lived will get no word or sign from her again, whatever their need of her. In contrast with "The Widower" was the next picture—a little group full of laughter, called "The Play-mates." A bare-shouldered girl with a charming gesture tickles the little dog that lies backward upon her arm. In 1878 Mr. Fildes was represented by "The Casuals" at the Paris International. In 1879 he was made an Associate of the Academy. The Philadelphia Centennial awarded him a medal, so that this period was rich in honours.

The next important subject was "The Return of the Penitent," also emotional, a little bit trite in the principal motive, but fresh in the treatment. Indeed, despite the sentiment of the title, the picture is principally a picture of the character of a country village, and a most faithful and excellent study of out-of-door evening light and tone. The leading figure of the subject is by no means the central figure of the composition, for the returned penitent, a forlorn young woman, has fallen on the steps of her old home to the extreme left, while the accessory personages occupy the rest of the picture, a large cart-horse and a carter with his children forming the middle and prominent group. Mr. Fildes has in no way idealised the loiterers in this straggling village street; he has aimed at the literal reproduction of character—an aim which cannot be attained without an almost subtle intelligence; witness the action and expression of the old woman who is gossiping over the matter in the middle distance, biting her nails with a thoughtful twist in her face. A little nearer, a group of urchins fresh from their tea peer at the girl round the corner of a house with boyish curiosity. One of them holds a thick slice of bread and

butter, a mouthful of which he is in the act of eating; his thumb turns back in mechanical avoidance of the buttered surface—an incident which we mention as an example of Mr. Fildes' veracity and observation in small things. The English peasant is now little else than a rustic townsman, and his dress and manner have a sordidness which cannot appear charming in art. Mr. Fildes, however, in the treatment of his figures, has borne in mind the excellent counsel given by Newton, the American artist, to his compatriot and brother of the brush, Leslie—"A painter cannot do better than attend to the advice of Polonius: 'Be thou familiar but by no means vulgar.'"

After exhibiting single figures in 1881 and 1882 (one of them a brilliant study of a Venetian girl), Mr. Fildes finished for the Academy of 1883 a picture which had been for some time on the easel, and which, with all its great merit, failed owing to the impossibility of the materials. In painting "The Village Wedding" in the prosaic rustic England of fact and truth, he attempted a feat which perhaps not another living painter could have achieved with more success. Moreover, he gave himself even more difficulty than he need have done by choosing a period sufficiently far back to present all the inevitable dowdiness of old fashions. The fashions at a village wedding are naturally not elegant, but when they were rustic versions of things that were extremely ugly even in the *beau monde*, they were hardly picturesque matter. We must suppose that the wedding-party in the picture were holding their gay but blowsy nuptials somewhere about the year 1858. Of course the one strong conventional temptation to an artist attacking such a subject was to be pastoral. Mason certainly would have been pastoral *quand même* and in spite of all. But Mr. Fildes absolutely set his face as a flint, and refused to be pastoral at all. He would not be pastoral even in the slight and moderate sense possible in England; he would not pretend that his wedding-guests appeared in shirt-sleeves, with braces falling about their waists; he would not give in by so much as a cotton gown or a sun-bonnet. He has dressed his bridegroom in the tall hat and Sunday coat and high collars of state occasions, and made his rosy face pinker with soap and water, and has attired his bride and her bridesmaids in the crinolines and muslins, the little curtained bonnets and black elastic boots that correspond. And among the wedding guests is a Life Guardsman in resplendent scarlet. Now it is just possible to bring a tall hat into serious art, for M. Legros has done it in his "Repas des Pauvres," where, equally with Mr. Fildes, he refused to be pastoral. But there all is gloom, with a certain mystery, and then the hats are old. Whereas in "The Village Wedding" they are nothing if not new, and they take the full light of the jocund day. It is, of course, an anomalous thing that a mere costume difficulty should frustrate a picture; but it is not so strange if we consider how completely, in our much-dressed times, the costume makes the figure, pictorially considered; it makes its composition, its form, its line, in a great degree its attitude. Nevertheless, apart from this all-important point, the people in "The Village Wedding" should be a pleasant and interesting group. The procession, coming fluttering with ribbons and



THE WIDOWER.
(By Permission of Thomas Taylor, Esq. of Aston Torvant.)

muslins, at a good swinging pace, towards the spectator, has a capital expression of movement. The bridegroom, we feel, must look a wholesome and comely man in his working dress, for his face is good and handsome even in its grotesque setting, and it beams with the frank happiness which no bridegroom of higher life would permit himself to exhibit; and the bride is as gentle, pretty, and modest as could be desired. And in execution the picture is extremely fine, showing no insistent dexterity or dash, but a quiet completeness and distinction full of charm. The work doubtless caused its author more anxiety, labour, and thought than any of his successes. It certainly was, by all the care bestowed upon it, a very important part of his self-education in the art which he was perfecting so fast.

For Mr. Fildes was at this time a harder student than ever. He determined to carry his technique further by constant work in the most advanced schools, and after the most brilliant examples. At the same time, "The Wedding" persuaded him that to gratify his strong inclination towards actuality and realism of subject he must work abroad. For that unlucky "Wedding" might have been painted, with equal truth to fact, yet with pleasure instead of offence, in any country in the world outside the British Islands—the Colonies and the United States always excepted. And not only was it fitting, nay, necessary, that his subjects should be taken abroad; the studies he was prosecuting—studies in *ensemble*, in light, and in execution—could only be thoroughly carried out under foreign influences, and with the stimulus and incitement of foreign example. Accordingly, "The Village Wedding" was no sooner given to the world than Mr. Fildes devoted himself to Venice. Naturally, there was some regret among people who had keenly admired the pathos of his earlier English subjects, and who would willingly have gone on forgiving a comparative dulness of manner if they could have been moved every year by a "Widower," or thrilled every year by "Casuals." But the artist was working out his own development in his own way, and he wisely kept himself free from all the temptation and persuasion of popularity. A few years before, Mr. Van Haanen had founded quite a little school for the study of contemporary Venice—a Venice unlike the sea-city of romancers, but full of a most characteristic life. The first picture of the school was the famous "Pearl-Stringers;" and all the painters who followed Mr. Van Haanen's example chose, like him, to paint specially the girl-population of Venice—the girls with their bright dresses (not costumes—they have a costume no longer), their towzled hair, their peculiar forms of Italian coquetry, their chatter, their work, and their idleness. And much as Mr. Fildes had promised now and then in the past, his achievement in the Royal Academy of 1884 was a very delightful surprise. He proved himself to be not only "in the movement," but in the very van of the movement. He frankly adopted the position of a disciple of younger men, but no sooner was this done than he proved himself their leader. His brilliant group of Venetian girls sewing together on the steps of a canal made a picture as complete and beautiful as anything that had been painted in the excellent young traditions of the new school in the City

of the Lagoons. The girls are studied from the very life; they have the pretty and rather weak faces, the amiable rowdiness, the untidy but perfectly pardonable linen, the cloudy hair, the nondescript but brilliantly-coloured dress of the Venetian type as it really is. A beautiful blonde in the centre of the group is embroidering some bluish-white tulle, which floats like a mist over her lap, her own chemise, which falls from her graceful shoulders, being of a warmer white. A little more in the background sits an idler maiden, whose thick black hair is being combed out by an old woman; a girl with a delicate profile is to the left; other damsels ply their needles on the opposite side. Quite in the foreground a delightfully amphibious Venetian baby is being prepared for a dip into the canal. All the group is studied in full and perfect daylight, and the *ensemble* of tone is absolutely right and masterly, while, for sheer brightness of mere daylight, the surfaces of the cotton dresses in the foreground surpass anything yet accomplished by an Englishman. A second canvas shows the single figure of a young Venetian woman, clad in variegated and intense colour, and with a dark face of great beauty. She is surrounded by triumphantly painted accessories. Now, in all this it was difficult to recognise the hand which produced the comparatively plodding and literal execution of "The Widower."

It was whispered, without authority, that the Academical powers did not quite smile on the new school of Anglo-Venetians—that, in fact, the President did not banish them altogether from his mind when he spoke at the banquet that year of those who are impatient and seek to "dazzle by dexterity." But there is something much worthier and much better than dexterity in the work of Mr. Fildes. There is a truth of lighting and a rightness which prove him the possessor of that great artistic gift—a fine, keen, and intelligent perception. He knows how to *see* as well as how to *paint*. Certainly the little group of partly foreign painters lighted up the dimness and dulness of the exhibition. It is much more reasonable to suppose that Sir Frederick Leighton, who certainly does not underrate beauty of technique, intended to reprove a far more extreme school, which has had rare representatives of late years in our galleries, and who practise "impressionism" in a manner never touched by Mr. Fildes.

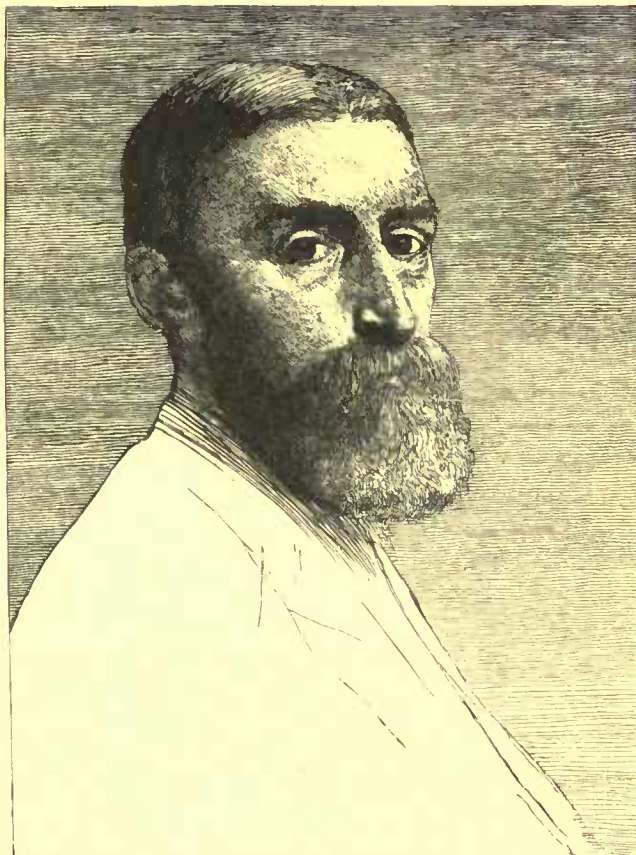
In the following year there was another Venetian group—girls again, and again an immediate foreground of water. The nearest figure is in profile, posed with a wonderful naturalness and spirit. The girl half sits upon one heel, and looks up, arrested at her task of rinsing a cloth to and fro in the canal, by the talk of her companions above her. Close at her back is one of the copper vessels in which the Venetians carry "the wash" to their homes. She is dressed in a bright spotted print, and has her hair in the misty disorder which is the fashion by the Lagoons. The other picture of this year was a single figure, "Rosetta."

So was each of the two works exhibited in 1886—"The Flower-Girl" and "A Daughter of the Lagoons." It is rather disappointing to Mr. Fildes' admirers to find him leaving groups even for a time; for among his chief merits is the difficult

achievement of presenting figures one with another, in the right relation together—relation of light and tone, and relation of animation and action. Bad actors, even when they look at one another, never seem really to be addressing one another, eye to eye and mind to mind. Nor are the figures in poor pictures mutually interested. And the relations of light and effect in a bad picture are invariably lifeless—the figures are added to one another with a dull deliberation. In Mr. Fildes' work all looks as vivid as though you saw it in a flash; and as complete as though you had a week to see it in.

Mr. Fildes has had his house (by Mr. Norman Shaw) erected in one of the happiest corners in London—that angle of Melbury Road which abuts on the forest trees and greenswards of Holland Park. Standing at this bend, the house faces south; it has for its right-hand neighbour the late Mr. Burges's pure thirteenth-century little château, with its massive walls and turret, and it looks across at Mr. Colin Hunter's low-windowed, quaint home, and at the rather severe, flat surfaces of Mr. Marcus Stone's—nothing marring the prospect except two or three builders' houses, ambitious but characterless, and evidently determined to be redder and brickier and more "artistic" and certainly bigger, than the architects' houses that surround them. To say that Mr. Fildes' house is one of Norman Shaw's is almost to describe its exterior. Its interior distribution is spacious, and the manner of the decoration gives an effect of grave and stately beauty altogether distinctive. The staircase and rooms are far loftier than is usual in red houses of this design, and the heights of simple wall covered with gold Japanese paper and dark tapestry are singularly effective. The entrance-hall is paved in Genoese fashion in *tesselli*. In the studio it is rather refreshing to note that perfect plainness which is suggestive of work.





(From the Etching by A. Legros. By Permission of Messrs. Seeley.)

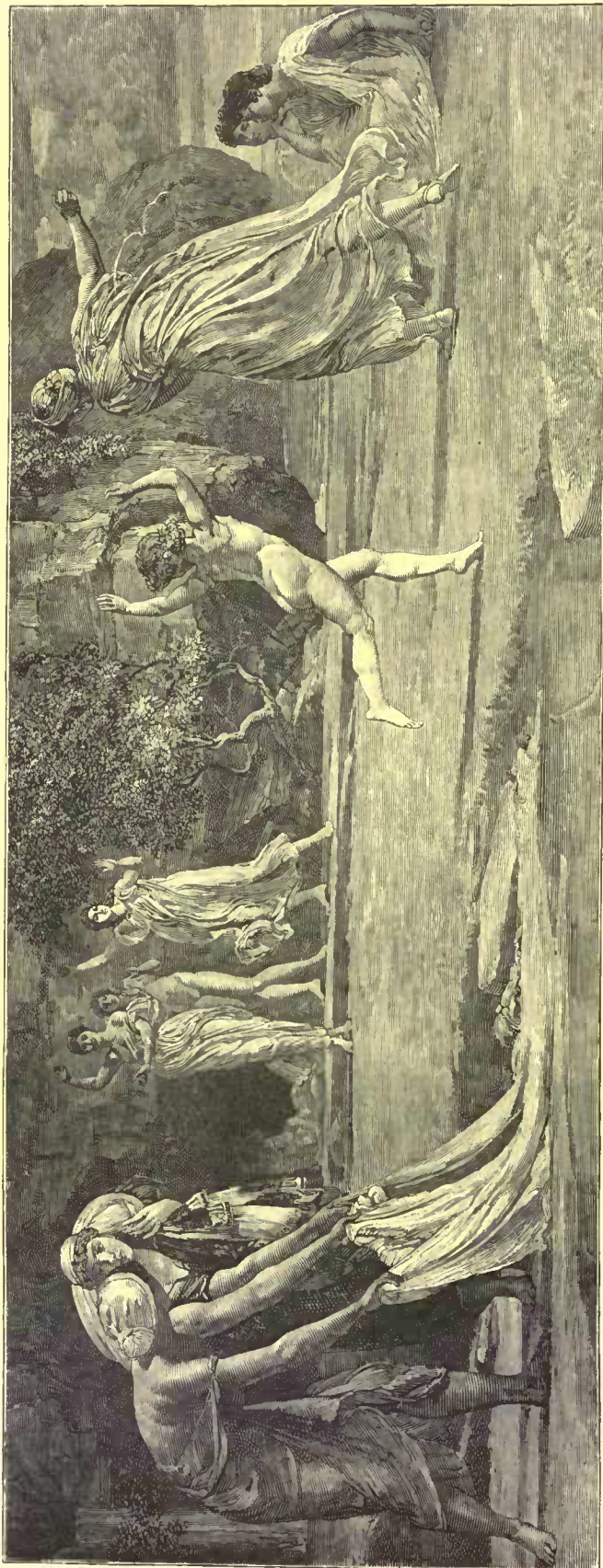
EDWARD J. POYNTER, R.A.

PR. POYNTER is essentially a learned painter, and his art demands from those who approach it knowledge at least sufficient to enable them to appreciate the height of his ambition and the nature of his aims. Only those who have themselves passed through something of the same searching discipline of mind and hand can expect to find pleasure without an effort in such work as his. An instinctive love of that which is strongest and noblest and most beautiful is not, alas! innate in all of us. Early surroundings will often warp the direction of even a fine natural taste; and there are many amongst us—of whom, by the way, Mr. Poynter himself has said some hard things—who are not sure of what they like, who are not sure of what they think beautiful, but who are haunted by the longing to know and desire only that which is so.

Every word of his “Lectures on Art” is inspired by a profound study and reverence for the works of Michael Angelo, the most heroic master of modern times; and we are thus prepared for the character of Mr. Poynter’s art, which is markedly grave and learned rather than spontaneous. Just as the French realist cried out,

after long looking at his model, "*Je ne vois plus! la nature me grise,*" one can imagine Mr. Poynter troubled beyond the power of speech or sight when beholding the walls of that Sistine Chapel whose glories he cherishes with constant passion and worship. Now this passion for and worship of the great Florentine has been shared by men of the most diverse aims and character. Blake adored his spiritual power; Reynolds bowed down before the great master in portraiture, who let no shred of individual character escape the keenness of his vision; and Jean François Millet—when he reckoned up the strong sensations received in the magic world which opened to him in the galleries of the Louvre—declared that from Michael Angelo alone did he obtain "complete impressions." It is because his work is always "complete" that each man who has some serious gift or grace may find himself in Michael Angelo; and there is one constant element in all he did which makes his art peculiarly attractive to Mr. Poynter. What we call "style," taken in its abstract sense, is a quality extremely difficult to define; but it is incontestably a marked feature of the art of Michael Angelo, as it is, indeed, the indispensable sign of all great art. Every work, of no matter what date, which may claim to be a masterpiece of art, is invariably impregnated with it. Whether we turn to the stupendous achievements of classic times, or to the glories of the Renaissance, we shall always find this distinguishing element; and we shall recognise that it is in virtue of its presence that the slightest sketch or the merest jotting of notes from the hand of a master acquires an untold value.

In England it is only by an effort of reason and reflection that we arrive at a conception of "style;" neither the public nor those who work for the public have, as a rule, any natural taste for it or any instinctive perception of what it means. Both English artists and their English patrons can and do take unalloyed pleasure in an art which has absolutely no trace of the pre-eminent beauty we call style. This peculiar characteristic has been frequently noted by foreign critics; and they have generally attributed it to the fact that art in England has for centuries past been divorced from any connection with the development of great religious and political institutions. To these it seems to have owed the elevated character which it attained in ancient Greece and in the Italy of more modern times; and through these the artist himself became an object of interest to the rulers of the State. In England, on the other hand, this divorce is so complete that the State has very naturally seen no reason for occupying itself with the well-being of artists, nor for interfering with the training of a class whom it could not employ. So that artists from whom all official recognition of the national importance of their profession was withheld have been forced to take the chances of such private patronage as they might secure by their own efforts, and in order to win the notice of those from whom alone they could hope to obtain the employment of their powers, they have necessarily been obliged to feel anxiously for each turn of the popular taste. Art thus exists among us only as an object of luxury, and artists have been forced, for the most part, into the more or less frivolous office of entertaining the leisure of classes whose



NAUSICAA.

(Drawn from the Sketch for the Picture.)

occupation is amusement and whose interests are purely personal. In portraiture and in the painting of anecdotic subjects the English painter finds that his services are chiefly required; in these two branches of his art he displays brilliant, solid, and often original powers, but the grand quality of style is not his birthright, and such as seek after it are forced to look back for support to the schools of other days and other climes. Thus we constantly find such of the painters of England as are visited by inward promptings which make them ill at ease in the circumstances by which they are surrounded, referring to Michael Angelo as to the supreme standard, in relation to which they judge of themselves and of their work, since of all the masters of modern days not one has shown in so large a measure the evidences of nobility of style. Thus, too, one who has, like Mr. Poynter, not only an instinctive love of style, but an inborn desire to see that which is noble, turns naturally to that great spirit which knew nothing that was not noble, and whose every line bears witness to his possession in a transcendent degree of that quality of style denied to lesser men and lesser times.

The desire to see that which is noble is almost necessarily



ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON.

(From the Design for Mosaic.)

accompanied by some touch of that austerity which comes out very strongly in the portrait of Mr. Poynter which we reproduce from an etching by Legros. For unless one in whom such a desire works is born to exceptional conditions—conditions of which we can now with difficulty conceive—he cannot be satisfied without much conscious putting away of things ignoble, without much painful effort, much of the self-discipline and severity that leave their sign on all it does. And at least until such self-discipline and such rejection of that which is low and trivial have become instinctive by constant habit, the pain of the effort needed will show itself in the manner of all our striving, and will make us seem harsh even when we would be most gracious; so that if the reader turns even to the illustrations which accompany these pages he will see at once why Mr. Poynter's work has been rather difficult of access and unattractive to the general public, and also why it is worthy all the honour and attention which the student can bestow.

From the first works exhibited by Mr. Poynter to the last we may trace an uninterrupted sequence of purpose and achievement. If we run over the list from 1864—when he made his first appearance on the walls of the Academy with “The Egyptian Sentinel” and “The Siren”—to 1882—when he exhibited “In the Tepidarium” and “Design for the Decoration of the Dome of St. Paul's”—we find his career marked by great variety of success, sometimes of course even in relative failure; but we have to note, in failure and success alike, the same dominant intention always directed with virile force to the attainment of the same class of objects. “The Egyptian Sentinel” and “The Siren” were followed by “The Pompeian Soldier” (1865), the “Offerings to Isis” (1866), and the “Israel in Egypt” (1867)—a work by which the painter won his first popular triumph, because, as it happened, the subject told a story which interested an enormous audience. For the English public adores an anecdote or an illustration, and a picture is always popular with them if it vividly presents some already familiar theme—just as a joke, to be favourably received by an English meeting, cannot be too well worn. Mr. Poynter, therefore, in taking for his subject the Captivity of Israel in Egypt was certain to arouse an outburst of popular sympathy; and his learned presentment of the bondage of the favoured nation under their hard taskmasters not only attracted the attention of all those labouring in the field of Egyptology, but awakened the curiosity of every English household in which the study of the Old Testament was a daily lesson.

But the admiration which his work excited, and which it had deserved by its intrinsic merits, left the artist apparently unmoved; for the merits which assured him regard and honour in his own profession had very little, if anything, to do with the momentary popularity which he had obtained. Strenuously determined on perfecting his own talent, he chose his next subject simply with a view to the further opportunity which it would afford for testing and developing his powers. He set himself to the painting of “The Catapult” (1868), with the same unflinching resolution to meet every difficulty of conception or execution full-front which he had shown from the first. The story told by this work—which procured

the painter's election as Associate of the Royal Academy—was not, however, likely to arouse much interest in the general public. The fall of Carthage before the brutal energies of Rome was no word of import to English homes, and the suggestions of Mr. Poynter's subject could not carry far with a popular audience; but it proved—and this was why he chose it—a fresh test to his powers. The slaves of Pharaoh appeared in myriad masses cast in strong relief upon their own blue shadows chequered by the glaring sun; the soldiery of Rome were revealed within the giant womb of the monster engine big with the fate of Carthage, their swarthy flesh glowing from out its protecting shades. The complicated details of the vast machine itself were put on canvas with extraordinary precision, and the problems involved in the working out of its construction had evidently been the subject of deliberate calculation. Every groaning pulley and straining rope, every beam and every weight, was adjusted in accordance with the strictest requirements of the engineering science of the past; and it was again made clear that the artist had in him, not only the stuff of an archæologist, but much of that peculiar mental fibre which lends itself with pleasure to

the treatment of mechanical problems—the fibre which has shown itself conspicuously more than once in the history of art, and that in some of her greatest men. The putting into motion of this old-world battery, with its strangely tormented system of shafts and windlass, needs must give occasion to the fullest variety of action among those employed upon it; and so we had groups of the strong servants of Rome, stripped to the sun and wind, toiling with an energy which brought up their starting muscles and their splendid thews till the flesh rippled before our eyes like swelling waves beneath the breeze, only with something of a far nobler beauty of playing and changeful line. To the left, in



THE IDES OF MARCH.

strong contrast, were the harnessed and helmeted archers crouching within the shadows cast by the massive supports of the shed which protected the catapult, and laying shaft to bow in defence of those who worked. The figures of this second group—like those of one or two of the subordinate actors to the right—seemed to



A STUDY OF A HEAD.

show some slackening of the nervous force with which Mr. Poynter had characterised the central personages of his design; and it was remarked by critics that many of the figures were in attitudes of action rather than in action, although less obviously so than was the case in some of his previous works.

Now the power of "drawing movement" would seem, except in very rare instances, to be in some measure denied to men whose main preoccupation is that of attaining high perfection and correctness in draughtsmanship. For, to give the impression of rapid movement, exaggerations always seem to be necessary which are repellent to a steady judgment. Dashes of brilliant suggestion will often render

higher service than the most accurate lines of definition, and the very effort to be perfectly accurate will sometimes defeat its own end. Mr. Poynter, dwelling always with great stress of intention on the forms which he seeks to render, does sometimes come short perhaps of producing exactly that impression which he had intended to convey. In this way his "Andromeda and Perseus" (1872) and his "Atalanta's Race" (1876) were disappointing. The thrust from the hand of Perseus, the tarrying of Atalanta, were moments of action which seemed to demand a certain swiftness of vision incompatible possibly with the painter's other gifts. Yet, with characteristic determination, he has fastened again and again on some fresh crisis of transitional movement; and in this respect, as in many others, his perfect consistency of aim, strong judgment, and tenacity of purpose have enabled him to snatch victory from every apparent defeat.

The advance made by Mr. Poynter in the development of his powers of design will be apparent to those who first examine his "St. George and the Dragon," a careful workmanlike drawing executed in glass mosaic for the Central Hall at Westminster in 1870, and who then call to mind his impressive scheme for the decoration of the dome of St. Paul's. To judge of the progress which he has made in the perfecting of his powers of draughtsmanship, we may look at the constrained attitude (correctly enough reproduced in our illustration for the purposes of this contrast) of the Roman soldier placing his arrow and his bow in the left-hand corner of "The Catapult," and then turn to the running figure of the boy from "Nausicaa and her Maids Playing at Ball" (1879); or let us study the "Visit to Æsculapius," fitly honoured in 1880 by purchase for the Chantrey Bequest. Or, again—if we would see how much more easily than of old as well as how much more expressively Mr. Poynter now constructs his groups—let us note the arrangement of the soldiers who stand one behind another to the extreme right of "The Catapult," and then observe the two figures of women wringing and washing linen from the "Nausicaa and her Maids."

In speaking of Mr. Poynter's successes, we find ourselves recurring to the exhibitions of several years ago rather than to those of more recent seasons. Mr. Poynter paints now as if he were out of spirits with his art. His "Diadumene," in spite of its serious study of the figure, did not equal in merit his earlier historical works, and it is no disparagement to the peculiar powers of this painter to say that portraiture lies very distinctly outside his range. This is a matter of the kind, and not of the degree, of talent. Great masters in most of the schools have been masters of portrait, but they had some love of actuality and character which Mr. Poynter apparently has not. That he would do well to give up this branch of art for the more classic subjects to which he has devoted the serious attention of his life is evident from the portrait of Lord Ripon in the Academy of 1886. Another Yorkshire nobleman has been associated with Mr. Poynter in a pleasanter way. For Lord Wharnccliffe is the happy possessor of some of the finest of this painter's works. A visitor to Wortley Hall, in 1880, speaks of them as being "the chief ornaments

of the stately and beautiful room for which they were painted. 'Perseus and Andromeda' shows the virgin chained to the rock by her hands, which are behind her back. Her head is decorated like that of an antique bride; her feet are on white drapery, which is washed by the sea, and drips on the stone; her red robe is



THE CATAPULT.

blown out in a wide curve. The monster has issued from the waves; his body trails in many folds, and penetrates the depths of a cave, which the waves fill. Perseus has alighted on a stone before the opening of the cave, and, standing with his feet wide apart and firmly placed, thrusts his falchion into the open mouth of the dragon between the teeth; he is in armour; his action is full of energy. Andromeda's form, the best part of the picture, is a fine example of vigorous conception, and shows the pallor of horror in every limb and feature. The sea is a capital, learned study. In 'The Fight between More of More Hall and the



DIADUMENE.

'Dragon of Wantley,' the dragon is under the foot of More, in the agonies of death. The action of the hero is full of intense passion. The finest part of the picture is, we think, the grand, weird, lonely-looking waste hills of the background, seen,

or half seen, in blue, misty twilight. 'Atalanta's Race' is even better known than either of its forerunners. The scene is near the middle of the course; the time is while the swift virgin stoops to pick up the treacherous apple. A golden fillet spreads like an iris above her shoulders as, keeping her robes together with one hand, she stretches the other to the prize; Hippomenes continues his flight, and the spectators cheer. The design is admirable, and fully carries out a vigorous conception. 'Nausicaa and her Maidens Playing at Ball' is best known of the series, and least of all needs description to remind readers of its exceptionally good colour, clearness, and pure illumination, the energetic nature of its design, and the careful draughtsmanship which it displays."

Reference has already been made to Mr. Poynter's "Lectures on Art," published in 1879, a volume displaying width of knowledge and trained accuracy of observation as to both the theory and the practice of art. Perhaps the greatest interest it aroused was in connection with a passage of arms between the artist and Mr. Ruskin. In an early part of the book Mr. Poynter expressed considerable respect for Mr. Ruskin. "The whole of his works, from beginning to end, set before us," he says, "more exalted notions of the beauty and sublimity of Nature than have ever been presented to us in words, amounting almost to the setting forth of a new religion of the purest and noblest type." Between the date of this earlier lecture and that of the ninth, however, Mr. Ruskin had criticised Mr. Poynter in his "Academy Notes," as having, in common with Michelangelo, drawn figures with the object of "showing the adaptability of limbs to awkward positions." Then Mr. Ruskin became not only "the prophet of a new religion, but its high priest: he has the genuine priestly intolerance of private judgment." Mr. Poynter went on to "explain to my students, likely to be misled by his special pleading, the general blindness to higher qualities of art which is observable in all Mr. Ruskin's later writings;" and he found that the result of his teaching "might easily be to supplant, by a canting affectation of nature-worship," direct and healthy study. These later writings were described as "mental pap;" and, finally, Mr. Poynter suggested that Mr. Ruskin's "animus" was to be "put down in charity to the lunacies of his declining years."

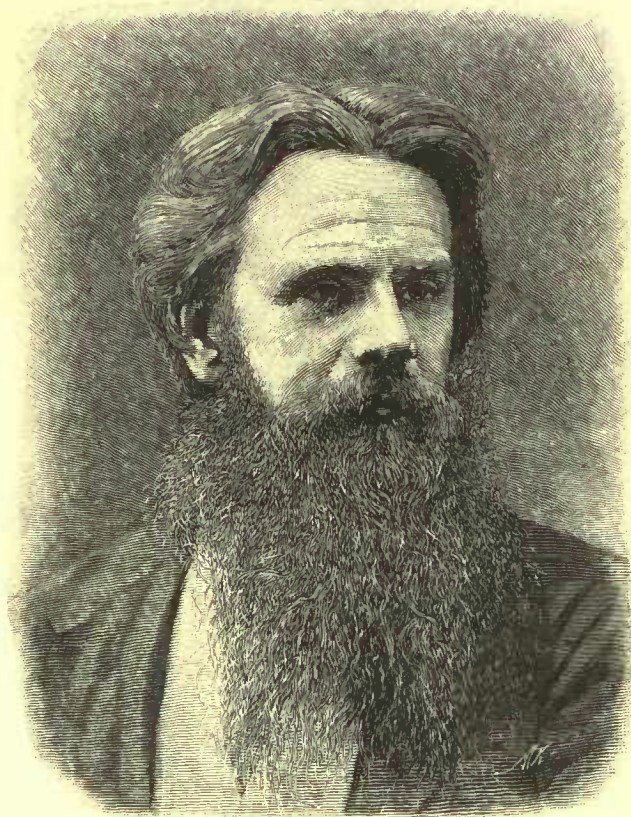
The Introduction prefixed to the Lectures showed the same decided disposition to carry war into the enemy's territory. There the following passage occurs:—"Mr. Ruskin has so consistently elevated the moral and sentimental side of art over the æsthetic, that we are tempted to suspect him of never having had any perception of beauty in art, as distinct from beauty in nature; and we may search his later writings in vain for any appreciation of beauty or form or colour. Beautiful colour with him seems synonymous with bright colour, or what he would call pure colour, as typical of purity; where he once thought he saw fine colour in Titian, he has since strenuously denied it; and his keen admiration of Turner's later work, which is full of crude contrasts of coarse colour, shows that his appreciation of Bellini's exquisite tones must be a mere accident. Of beauty of form he seems to have no perception whatever: as for the great artistic qualities, design and harmony, if he

has ever taken them into consideration, or has ever seen them at all, he has long ago set them aside as valueless."

In one of the Lectures themselves is a passage conceived in the same tone. "If Mr. Ruskin could speak his real mind about the 'Last Judgment' it would probably be something to this effect:—'I deny the right of Michelangelo not only to treat the subject of the "Last Judgment" in a way in which it does not appeal to me, but I deny his right to treat the nude figure at all; I have never cared to study the nude figure, and have no perception or appreciation of its beauty; when I speak of the glory of nature and of God's works, I exclude the human figure, both male and female, and refer you to mossy rocks and birds' nests, sunset skies, red-herrings by Hunt, robin-redbreasts—anything you like, in fact, but the figure for its beauty.'"

Of course, it was rather rash to put such words into the mouth of the great art-critic; nevertheless, the increasing class which now prizes Mr. Ruskin's teaching more and more for its ethics and less and less for its æsthetics (reversing the emphatic estimate of him common some twenty years ago), will be inclined to see some truth in Mr. Poynter's words. No one, probably, is more conscious than the painter is now himself of what was exaggerated and extreme in his own part in this curious little passage of arms. But these passing controversies have, perhaps, the merit of attracting by their racy, personal interest, the attention of portions of the public, otherwise uncaught, to artists and their opinions; and some who come to scoff may remain to study and admire. The quarrels of authors have been made the subject of a volume; and, on the generally-accepted principle that two blacks make a white, the scribe has a certain satisfaction in recording how one Slade Professor metaphorically flung his Lectures in the face of another—and that other a man for whom, under all surface irritation, every painter must hold depths of admiration in his heart.





Yours ever W. Holman Hunt

(From a Photograph by J. G. Hemery, Regent Street.)

WILLIAM HOLMAN HUNT.

FNTIRE and most conscientious devotion to his art, as the one great leading purpose of his life, is the characteristic which must strike all who are acquainted with Mr. Holman Hunt or his works. Had not his love for it been inborn, invincible, he could never have triumphed over the obstacles to its pursuit which beset his early days. Moreover, had there not existed in him a serious belief that it was his destiny to be a painter in spite of everything, we should hardly have found a nature so entirely tender and affectionate as his persistently running counter to the earnest wishes and entreaties of a beloved parent.

In this brief space it would be impossible to follow the narrative of his young life in anything like that detail which its great interest demands. Suffice it that, owing to a personal acquaintance with certain unfavourable specimens of the brethren

of the brush, and being painfully impressed by an account of the dissolute life and career of George Morland, his father set himself in direct opposition to the pursuit of art as a profession. He, too, in his early days, had some leaning that way, with, it is said, no mean executive ability, as still existing specimens of it testify. But this power having, as it would seem, been suppressed upon moral grounds by the elder Hunt himself when a young man, he had no scruple about demanding the same sacrifice from his son when the inherited taste began to develop itself. The child was therefore destined for a commercial career, and at the early age of twelve and a half was taken from school, and placed in a merchant's office as the surest means of at once putting an end to a love for drawing which was becoming all-engrossing, and which his father looked upon as likely to prove, if persisted in, dangerous and destructive to the boy's future.

Fate, however, was on the side of the son, and by the strangest coincidence it turned out that the merchant with whom he was placed was himself an amateur artist, who, discovering young Hunt on one occasion occupying his leisure in drawing, actually encouraged him, and initiated him into the mysteries of oil-painting, by aid of materials stowed away in a cupboard of the boy's office, which had about it many elements of a studio.

Amongst the opportunities thus afforded him at every spare moment for carrying on his beloved pursuit in his little office, one occurred by which he practically distinguished himself. During his master's absence one morning, a certain old gentleman called, of whom, whilst he was waiting, Hunt made a striking pencil sketch. This led to the identification of the man by the police as a begging-letter impostor long "wanted." The merchant thereupon made such strong representations to the elder Hunt, that he consented reluctantly to his son's giving up a commercial life, and trying to qualify himself for a studentship at the Royal Academy; but long before this could be accomplished the father repented, and again insisted that Holman should seek another situation in the City. The first the lad had found for himself, and now he obtained a second in the London agency office of a Manchester cotton house. He exerted himself to do this, because he hoped that from the subordinate routine nature of his work he might yet steal a little leisure to go on with his drawing, and because he knew that his father was endeavouring to find him a post in a firm where the business would be so active and pressing from morning till night, as to leave him no chance of any leisure moments. Unconscious of this, perhaps, pardonable purpose on Holman's part, Mr. Hunt was contented, and made no further efforts to thrust the boy into the whirlpool of business which he feared so much.

As in his first situation, so now, strangely enough, in his second, fate smiled on the young enthusiast. As in the first he had chanced upon surroundings which gave him an insight into oil-painting, so now in his second he scraped acquaintance with the rudiments of water-colour, for considerable work was done in this agency office by designers of patterns for the Manchester cotton house, and we may be sure he

did not neglect to avail himself of all the hints he could thus pick up. Again his occupation of copying letters, making entries, etc., was carried on in a sort of studio, and he had no difficulty, of course, in establishing by degrees a claim to use it as such at times for himself.

During a dull autumn season, when he was doing little more than minding the office, he persuaded a certain handsome old Jewess, a fruitseller at the street-corner, and well known in the neighbourhood, to sit to him. So successful was the portrait in oil which he made of her that, when it was seen, and the likeness as well as his talent recognised, he got many remunerative commissions for replicas of the picture from gentlemen who came to the house on business. They declared he ought to be an artist; and this encouragement, added to the fact that he had displayed no aptitude for commerce, as his master roundly told him, determined him to burn his boats, and, come what might, to strive to be a painter.

The circumstance of some young boy clerk having taken the portrait of Nanny the fruitseller oddly enough reached the ears of old Mr. Hunt, for he also was occupied in a large City warehouse. He said to his son, "Now, Holman, if you could do that sort of thing, and make some money by your brush as this youngster has done, I don't know that I should oppose your wish." But when he learned, as a sequence to this remark, who the youngster was, he immediately withdrew his half-granted consent, and, in spite of his surprise and inward gratification, still refused to allow his son to follow his bent. So the lad took his own course, broke with his father for a time, and though the struggle to live was hard, managed to keep his head above water, and to launch himself on his career as a painter.

Born in Wood Street, Cheapside, in 1827, he was at this time sixteen, and after some study at the British Museum, etc., was admitted in 1844 as a probationer, and in 1845 as a student, at the Royal Academy. As he did not regard the unbroken exhibition of his pictures as of much importance to his ultimate reputation as an artist, Holman Hunt's name, after its annual recurrence for eight years, appeared but very irregularly in the Royal Academy catalogues. Although he began to exhibit in 1846, it was not until 1852 that any very marked attention was given to his work, but the nature of it that year fanned the flame of the controversy about Pre-Raphaelitism which had been kindled in 1850 by Millais' "*Carpenter's Shop*." Nay, though Millais' experiment in religious art had had the good or ill fortune to excite the public and the press, it was to Hunt that the first publication, as it were, of the Pre-Raphaelite movement was really due. He painted the first Pre-Raphaelite picture—a fact which has never had full recognition. This work, which was to have consequences and a posterity, was "*Rienzi*," illustrating a passage in the Tribune's early years. The families who held Rome as a kind of private fighting-ground have just had an affray in the roads; Rienzi's young brother has been killed, but, careless of the blood of the plebeian, the knights ride away—except one, whose gentler nature is touched, and who pauses by the roadside. Rienzi, kneeling by the young body, swears his memorable oath of vengeance and liberation. His arm is

raised and his mouth set angrily. At this time Hunt and Rossetti, the inspiring and master genius of the little group of boy-enthusiasts, had a studio together, and, in the spirit of mutual charity which was practised by the brotherhood, the great poet sat to his co-mate—sat to him with all the patience which Pre-Raphaelite fidelity required, calling up the savagery of expression appropriate to the moment. The press did not spare the personal appearance of the friends who rendered each other this service; with criticism of the pictures were mingled remarks the reverse of complimentary upon the models. In this case Mr. Holman Hunt found that he



THE SCAPEGOAT.

(By Permission of Messrs. Henry Graves and Son.)

made considerable calls not only upon his companion's physical endurance, but upon his mental stoicism as well. To this time of studentship and of dawning notoriety belongs also a portrait of Rossetti—a mere sketch, but invaluable as a record of the face in early youth. To return to the first Pre-Raphaelite picture. Attention should particularly be paid to the row of trees in the further plane, and to the growth of grasses and bushes in the foreground; for in the treatment of these we find the earliest instance, in the modern English school, of work absolutely from Nature. Not only the kind of tree but the individual tree has been studied from the life. It was the beginning of the end of "generalisation." If work is to be valued for what it does as well as for what it is, this almost forgotten "Rienzi," which advanced principles that have become the commonplaces of our day, should have a little niche of fame.

Another very early work was "The Flight of Madeline and Porphyro" from the "Eve of St. Agnes"—the first of several pictures from Keats. Mr. Holman Hunt shows the lovers passing stealthily through the hall where the late revellers of the previous night have fallen asleep over their cups. These groups are rather exaggerated in their drunkenness; and for an artist bound to observe truth to facts, as a Pre-Raphaelite was bound, the painter has clothed his heroine strangely enough. She is flying into the storm—that snowstorm of which Keats makes us feel all the frost and fury, when "the owl for all his feathers was a-cold"—with bare arms, and her light loose dress ungirt and unwrapped. "Valentine Rescuing Sylvia from Proteus" is a subject from the "Two Gentlemen of Verona." It made a protest against the ideals of beauty—if we may dignify them by that name—which prevailed at the time when it was painted. And with conventional prettiness Mr. Hunt put aside all beauty whatsoever—for which no one will blame him who remembers that no reforms are wrought by moderation. Sylvia, whom "all the swains commended," is presented as a hard-featured person of mature age, with the severe figure which Pre-Raphaelitism affected. As for poor Julia, who stands in her page's dress, with her thin, loose-stockinged legs thrust out straight before her, she is a white-eyelashed damsel of such ill favour that the treason of Proteus is explained if not excused. With regard to the two men, the critics of the day, with their usual unkindness, objected that whatever the artist had presented in his male figures, he had not given *gentlemen* of Verona. Nevertheless, the Valentine is not without dignity, and the whole picture, whatever its oddities, is worthy of respect for its thoroughly painstaking workmanship.

A more entire admiration must be given to "The Hireling Shepherd" and "Christian Missionaries taking Refuge in the Hut of a British Family." The former is a most fresh and sunny landscape, with a curiously far-fetched allegory acted out by the figures.

Sleepest thou, wakest thou, jolly shepherd?
Thy sheep are in the corn.
But for one blast of thy minikin mouth,
Thy sheep shall take no harm.

The shepherd in this delightful English landscape is a round-faced Englishman in a smock frock, who is dallying with an ugly siren of the fields while his sheep are going astray. The manner of his dalliance is queer enough. He has caught a death's-head moth, which he shows her in half superstitious fear. She sits with a young lamb in her lap, and feeds it with green apples. The flock is bursting through a weak fence into the standing corn. The song in "Lear" implies that the corn will hurt the sheep rather than the sheep the corn; but Mr. Holman Hunt should have taken Pre-Raphaelite counsel with a farmer, who would have told him that his wheat is much too young to disagree with the flocks of the hireling. Even so far the allegory seems elaborate enough. But Mr. Holman Hunt goes on to explain—what no one would have discovered—that the picture was painted in rebuke of the religious trivialities which he believed to be

prevalent in England about the year 1851. The whole *technique* of the picture is a great advance in ease and completeness over the earlier works we have mentioned above. And far better still is "The Christian Missionaries," in which a power of colour is developed—not a violence of colour, but a pure strong harmony, worthy of Perugino or almost any of the Pre-Raphaelites who were Pre-Raphaelites indeed. The story is told with a curious emphasis and explanation, also decidedly Italian and "early." The missionaries, Orientals who have pushed on through Rome to Rome's remote possessions, have been preaching to the people amid a group of Druidical monuments; there has risen an *émeute*, and the dark pale-faced Syrians are flying before an angry mob. This is seen through the windows of the hut, which is entirely open on the side nearest to the spectator, a stream forming its protection. One missionary is in the act of being overtaken in a field; the other is hidden in the hut, and the family of British converts are ministering to him in his exhaustion. They bathe his feet, and take the brambles from his robe, and pour out water for his refreshment, their fairness contrasting with the worn Eastern face. And here again we are constrained to find fault, to which we are challenged by the precision and truthfulness of Mr. Holman Hunt's school. He has painted his Britons from modern English models, averring that we have no reason to suppose that the race has changed greatly. Obviously, in painting from his contemporaries, he should have sought his sitters in Wales. He has given us, in fact, a family of fair-haired old-English, and not a family of Britons. But, for exquisite beauty of detail, especially in the foreground growths of water-plants, and for serious and high qualities of colouring, this picture remains one of the painter's best achievements.

"The Missionaries" has, moreover, a quality of dramatic expressiveness which is wanting to the illustration of "Measure for Measure," "Claudio and Isabella" of about the same time. As usual, the subject is here thoroughly and ingeniously thought out; but there is an indefinable effeminacy and triviality in the Claudio, and a certain tameness in the Isabella which does not accord with Shakespeare's records of her peculiarly vigorous, voluble, and energetic virtue. Claudio is shackled in his prison; his love of life and his careless youthfulness are typified by the ribbon-decked lute hung up, and by the tree which is all in blossom at his window, outside in the happy world he is loth to leave. He has just spoken his cowardly hesitation, and his sister stands erect in her novice's dress and rebukes him. The feeble youth has curled up one leg in token of vacillation. Surely, while the young Pre-Raphaelites were allowing themselves such irritating effeminacies as this, it was not strange that robustious public opinion should be led into presumptuously and cruelly condemning them wholesale, mingling good and bad qualities in indiscriminating dislike.

That rash public and press opinion, nevertheless, was beginning at about this period (1853) to reconsider its impatient verdict. Three of the pictures just described won modest prizes at Liverpool and Birmingham. And now arose the



ISABELLA AND THE POT OF BASIL.

(By Permission of Messrs. Pilgeram and Lefevre.)

champion who was to fight Holman Hunt's battles and the battles of Millais in a manner of warfare they could never have waged for themselves. The most virile, most original, most intense and expressive English style in modern literature was put at the service of these young artists by the young Ruskin. He found in them painters altogether after his heart; in ethics, serious, charging their work with direct moral intentions; in Art, gentle and industrious handicraftsmen, devoted to the facts of Nature, and not concerned with Art's own separate work of interpretation, selection, and rejection; giving their days and nights to adding finish to finish. The attitude of mind, the attitude of hand were such as Ruskin loved and approved. His noble enthusiasm for the work of others took fire; and the young critic stood forth suddenly as the authority whose word was thenceforth to win at least respect and consideration for all on whose behalf it was spoken. Especially in the cause of Mr. Holman Hunt, Mr. Ruskin wrote two memorable letters to the *Times*. The English public was more easily reached by the literature of Art than by Art only, and it received, in a wonderfully universal manner, the words of Ruskin as instruction and guidance. The days of contempt were virtually over for the Pre-Raphaelites. With the perversity common to human nature, some of them, having once gained toleration of their peculiarities, quickly abandoned them. Mr. Holman Hunt, however, remained absolutely unchanged. Others might hasten, one by one, to Post-Raphaelite developments; he alone has worked, in 1886, by the same methods which he followed in 1848.

"The Light of the World" (1854) has undoubtedly been one of the most popular religious pictures in the world. Its symbolism was easy, yet suggestive; its motive pathetic; it pleased the religious sense of the country, and was accepted as a picture not only religious but devotional. The engraving became famous. And Mr. Ruskin interpreted it with an ingenuity which strikes us now as very curiously distinct from anything that the schools of Europe would consider artistic. The very trees (especially the apple trees) of the orchard background are charged with allusions. The doubt which suggests itself to the modern mind is whether in painting "The Light of the World" Mr. Holman Hunt was not passing beyond the range of pictorial art by painting a mere metaphor. "Behold I stand at the door and knock" was surely spoken with no intention of calling up in the hearers a mental picture of physical facts. In the same way the words, "that fox, Herod," neither produce nor are intended to produce the mental picture of an actual fox. The phrase addresses the intelligence directly, and makes no appeal to mental vision. Now, when no picture is called up in the imagination, ought a picture to be called up on canvas? Is it not materialising a thought which was never meant to be materialised? Of course, when an allegory is presented by way of vision, as in Revelation and some of the Old Testament visions, or by way of allusive fable, as in the Gospel parables, a picture may be made most legitimately. Here the picture is a repetition of the strong image presented to the mind. But all such awkward questioning apart, "The Light of the World" has singular beauties.

The expression of the Saviour's face is profound and touching, and humility is mingled with dignity in the whole meaning of the figure. Mr. Holman Hunt did not adhere inexorably to the Pre-Raphaelite principle of rendering one model faithfully; for the face of the Christ he took something from several of his friends, and much of the expression from the face of a woman, a poetess, whose tender religious feeling made her part in the work a true labour of love. The orchard scene, the old door, the weeds and the other accessories, were painted with long realistic study in a garden near Great Marlow. Millais was painting one of his landscape or garden backgrounds in the same place.

In or about the same year appeared "The Awakened Conscience," which also had the inestimable benefit of Mr. Ruskin's praise and explanation. Here is presented a little drama of modern life, in the rendering of which the painter has dwelt upon details of vulgar comfort and ugly luxury altogether more impossible (pictorially) than the utmost squalor. In a little London drawing-room, furnished as drawing-rooms of commonplace people were furnished in 1854, "a trivial, heedless man is playing the notes of an old air which rouses the sleeping moral sense of the girl whom he has entrapped." Rather melodramatically, "Oft in the stilly night" touches her remembrances so keenly that she starts up from the man's side in horror. He tries to detain her with a careless hand as he touches the notes without removing his gloves. As we have said, the interior, which is intended to be rather elegant, is inevitably profoundly vulgar, and the painter has dealt with it in his usual uncompromising manner.

Impelled by that strong sympathy for religious themes which his brush always manifests, Hunt after this betook himself to the East, and with the same enterprise and disregard of difficulties which he has ever displayed, commenced on the spot the study of the scenery and facts which make up the background and surroundings of Biblical history. The mysterious and weird region of the Dead Sea for the first time found a pictorial exponent, and with "The Scapegoat," standing on its salt-encrusted marshy marge, we had the principal result of that visit to the Holy Land. The vivid if crude colour and rigid truthfulness which characterised the painting of microscopic detail on former canvases were equally exhibited here, and the great beauty of that portion of the landscape which consisted of the mountain-range of Moab under the gorgeous effect of an Eastern evening light compensated, even in the eyes of the stoutest opponents of the new school, for much that was unquestionably ugly in the picture. Moreover, it was not meant to be beautiful as the world usually understands beauty. The outcast goat, driven into the wilderness by the stones of all who should chance to see it, sinking exhausted and famished in the salt marsh, is not intended to delight the eye in any way; but assuredly with its awful significance it touches the heart. Without violating the limitations of animal expression, the painter has made the unhappy creature look not merely hungry, or thirsty, or hunted, but burdened with evil. He has certainly realised to the fulness the mysterious type, and no one can look at

this solemn canvas without realising it also. Mr. Ruskin, in his "Academy Notes," glorified the artist. Three minor works, "The Sphinx," "Jerusalem by Moonlight," and "A View looking towards the Mountains of Moab," were also the outcome of this journey.

One of the fruits of a second visit to the East was seen at the Royal Academy in 1861, in the "Lantern-maker's Courtship," a quaintly humorous exposition of a street scene in Cairo, where a young workman is manipulating the face of his betrothed over the veil, or *yashmak*, which hides from view all but her eyes.

But this time Mr. Holman Hunt dwelt long in Jerusalem, and devoted himself



THE DISCIPLINE OF PAIN.

(From a Drawing on Wood.)

to one of the principal works of his life, "The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple." This picture introduced into the painting of Scripture subjects the same kind of realism and study of facts which the Pre-Raphaelites had insisted upon in all the scenes they had presented. Scripture had before been painted according, more or less, to Occidental reading; Mr. Holman Hunt began to paint it Orientally. He tried on the very spot to conjure up the very scene; and the result was revolutionary. The tradition of the religious art of many centuries had so formed the habits and tastes of people that the kind of truth sought by Mr. Hunt—truth to fact—almost shocked them as a novelty and almost an irreverence. The interior of the Temple in this picture is treated with rather more than the artist's customary insistence upon detail, near and distant. The workmanship is perfectly wonderful, whether in the traceries which show against the evening sky or in the faces of the doctors in their varying degrees of age, from the dark-bearded and keen-eyed disputant to the old man blind from age and unable to see the face of

the Boy who has surprised and startled their learning. They sit, ranged with their rolls in their hands, and the young Saviour stands hesitating, eager to stay, yet willing to obey the Mother who urges him tenderly. He plays with the end of His girdle, His eyes looking thoughtfully away out of the picture. The Virgin and St. Joseph have entered the Temple with their garments girded and the dust of the roads on their feet; the opening of the doors at their sudden coming has let in some wandering doves which a woman is trying to drive out again with her long scarf. The Virgin presses her face close to that of her Son to whisper her question. The whole picture, if looked at in detail through a lens, would probably reveal only a greater minuteness of miniature work; nevertheless the colour is kept pure and intense. A small study, finished up to the extreme point of what is possible to human eyesight, was exhibited in 1886 in London, but the original picture is rather jealously guarded by its possessor. At its first exhibition in 1862 it drew numbers to Bond Street; for by this time Mr. Holman Hunt's relations with the Academy had ceased to be very cordial, if they could ever have been so described. It would indeed be impossible to imagine a man more out of sympathy with a crowded scrambling annual selling show than this devoted painter, who considers six years in the sun and solitude of Jerusalem not too great a sacrifice to make for the sake of a serious offering to religious art.

Other Eastern subjects, notable amongst them "The After-Glow," together with "Isabella and the Pot of Basil," the result of a lengthened stay in Italy and of earnest study of Florentine art, and some strangely-wrought portraits, all distinguished by the painter's addiction to facts as he sees them, served, at very irregular intervals, to keep the name of Holman Hunt before the world till 1873. "The After-Glow" was a very hard study of that wondrous effect of Egyptian climate; a young Fellah woman, carrying sheaves on her head, stands full face, with some calves at her side. "Isabella" is shown in the solitude of night, just arisen from her sleepless bed in the rich chamber of her Florentine home, leaning with her arm cast over the pot wherein her basil grows green and vigorous over the buried head of her lover. Tears are in her eyes, and her whole action shows abandonment of grief. Mr. Holman Hunt has chosen a rather heavy, dark, and robust, and yet not altogether Italian, type for the model of his heroine. Another scarcely-remembered picture belonging to this time was that of a seamstress or shopwoman kneeling at her morning prayers before setting out from her solitary lodging for the day's work. The painter intended to render a tribute to perfectly obscure piety and privation—the unknown virtue that comes and goes in our cities without praise or pity.

In 1873 Mr. Holman Hunt returned from another long stay in Jerusalem with one of the greatest pictures of his life—"The Shadow of the Cross." Its greatness cannot be denied, however strongly a critic may differ from its methods, or even from its artistic aims. It is great of its kind and in its own way. The leading idea is ingenious—and the ingenuity seems serious and suggestive to some minds, puerile to others. There is no dogmatising as to that. The Saviour is supposed

to have been at work throughout the day, sawing and planing in His carpenter's workshop, and as the evening draws on, He lifts Himself to look towards the sun, whose setting is the signal of repose. It is the hour when all Syrian workmen sing their song, in which the sun is bidden to hasten and go down quickly. They look to the west, "desiring the shadow," as the Scripture has it. In raising Himself from the saw, Christ casts up His arms to relieve the strain of labour, and the shadow upon the wall behind Him takes the shape of a man crucified. The Virgin is kneeling, with her back turned to the spectator, looking into the chest in which she has kept the gifts of the three kings of the Epiphany. Looking up from these tokens of prophecies of glory, she is startled by the prophecy of woe which meets her in that ominous shadow. Her figure is mean and trivial almost beyond description. But in the face and figure of the Saviour Mr. Holman Hunt has made a strange and great success. Strange, because he has departed from the tradition of fair and princely lineage in Christ's family, presenting merely a bronzed Syrian workman, and yet has made no compromise of dignity. The face has an expression of spiritual yearning which absorbs the mere physical fatigue. It is altogether a lovely and worthy expression. The figure is in the strong and intensely-coloured sunshine of evening; and in its study the artist spent himself in most strenuous labour. In order to get the short effect of the time, he took his model evening by evening on the roof of a house. All the energy of a day was as it were concentrated in the tense effort of the sunset hour. It was boisterously windy weather, the sunsets were often cloudy or in some way wrong, and the painter had the elements against him. Also it was with difficulty that he obtained models at all, the Mohanmedans, for instance, having religious scruples as to sitting. The painting of "The Shadow of the Cross" took much of Mr. Holman Hunt's life—not in time only, but in health, strength, and spirit. As we have said, opinion is much divided as to this picture. That it has had trivial criticism is not to be wondered at. All Pre-Raphaelites insist upon fidelity to little facts; and it is not strange that press and public should express surprise that after a day's sawing the workshop should be filled with shavings (prismatically tinted, and so elaborated that a year's work may have been spent on them), but that there should not be so much as a pinch of sawdust. A truly great picture such as this should not be subjected to such remarks, but the school has brought them on itself.

Twelve years (chiefly spent in the East) elapsed before Mr. Holman Hunt gave another very important picture to the world. "The Flight into Egypt" has not been a popular success. The painter's intentions required explanation, and his allusions were somewhat intricate. Nevertheless, in making of the souls of the Holy Innocents a kind of guard of honour for the Infant Saviour in His flight, the artist certainly conceived a beautiful idea. And to this work, as to its predecessors, he has given mind and soul, strength and vigour and labour, with six years at least of his devoted and single-hearted life.



Meissonier

JEAN LOUIS ERNEST MEISSONIER.



OFTEN an originator, whether in large matters or in small, receives this paradoxical injustice at the hands of fate—that his productions bear in the eyes of the world any characteristic except novelty, any merit except freshness. His imitators, if they can rob him of nothing else, will rob him of these; and such—inasmuch as he is the originator in quite modern times of what may be called the microscopic *genre*—has been the fortune of M. Meissonier. A small school of followers—less conspicuous in the last ten years than they had been for some time previously—have carried out what



THE SIGN-PAINTER.

(From the Painting by J. L. E. Meissonier. By Permission of MM. E. Leclerc et Cie.)

he has begun in the way of minute perfection, never surpassing him in his own inimitable quality of bold neatness of execution, but (in the person of M. Domingo) outdoing him in the matter of colour. We have spoken of him as originating microscopic *genre* in our own times; of course those completest of artists, the Dutchmen Gerard Douw, Metz, and Terburg, have painted—in altogether a different spirit—with all the detailed finish of Meissonier, but hardly ever perhaps on so small a scale, and never with that altogether free and dexterous touch which so peculiarly distinguishes his work. The Dutch manner was more purely and simply imitative of Nature, the quality of the execution in the finest Dutch examples being so perfect that neither the paint nor the artist's handling of the paint makes itself sensible or apparent, whereas in M. Meissonier's work, although the dexterity is by no means obtrusive, there is no such effacement. His minuteness then is, or was, all his own. A lover of the "infinitely little," he is one of the most



THE VEDETTE.

(By Permission of MM. E. Leoultre et Cie.)

masculine of painters—a painter indeed too masculine for sweetness of form or tenderness of manner; he is never weak, but then also he is never lofty; never trite, never pretty, never vulgar, never thoughtful, never pathetic. None of the modern seekers after poetry in art can have anything in common with him, for the mystical, the intense, and the subtle, do not exist in his work; nor has he anything in common with the lover of sentiment. The general intelligent admiration of his painting is not likely to be ever lessened by anything difficult in the character or expression which he represents; in his characters he is full of energetic and powerful distinctness, and in his expressions he is insistent and broad. His subjects also are such as command the general interest; martial

tenue and equipments, courtly little scenes of the last century, passages of recent military history—these bits of commonplace, combined with character and costume, are such as succeed in pleasing at once the many and the few. The latter, who have no delight in lenses and no special passion for the minute in painting, find a more educated pleasure in the breadth, the space, and the ease which he introduces into the tiniest frame. M. Edmond About said that he “stowed fifty French guards, full of life and movement, into a space where two cockchafers would not have room to stir.” This quality of *largeness* the artist is said to preserve by invariably designing and composing in life-size; and by free, vigorous, and rapid sketching in chalk of the first conception of a figure. It is in his faces especially that this admirable largeness is most noticeable; into the minute features of some veteran of the First Empire he contrives to introduce not only free, angular, and broad drawing, but a character, a past, a history—and all as it were at leisure, at ease, and with room to spare. As a colourist he undoubtedly, in the eyes of those who love beautiful colour, leaves something to be desired, but he is a master of tone.

M. Meissonier's artistic biography is a record of altogether unvaried good fortune, honour, and success. It is now a long record, the artist having been born at Lyons in or about the year 1813. He began his studies at a very early age, of course in Paris, and equally of course under the master of his choice, M. Léon Cogniet. His success, as soon as he emerged from his state of pupilage, was immediate; and he was in his mature years established as one of the representative, expressive, and typical talents of the Second Empire. Whatever may be M. Meissonier's present attachment to the Republic, it was under a military empire that his gifts found their fittest development, and in the Emperor himself he had an admirer and an enthusiastic patron. His *début*, however, dates back to a time before the *Coup d'État*, having taken place in the year 1836, when he exhibited “The Little Messenger.” From that day his fame steadily increased until it reached the point of eminence which it has steadily held. His pictures at the Salon never fail to attract their crowd year by year, and decade by decade, while such of his precious canvases as make their way to Pall Mall or Bond Street find an equal enthusiasm, “The Fight” being, perhaps, the best known and most popular amongst us—and with reason, for it belongs to our reigning family through the graceful gift of the late Emperor to the Prince Consort. The picture represents, as our readers are probably aware, a sudden and passionate quarrel outside a wine-shop; the combatants are tearing away from the hands of the bystanders in order to get at each other's throats, and hardly ever in the whole history of art has movement in its impulse, directness, and sincerity, been more energetically rendered; both men mean what they are doing, nor are their companions playing at holding them back, for the “principals” have drawn their knives, and a moment will bear the decision of life or death. This wonderful picture, be it remembered, was produced by a pencil which had been almost entirely devoted to subjects of

repose. A curious anecdote is told of the painting of "The Rixe," "The Fight," or "The Tavern Row," however we may translate it. Meissonier would not paint the figures in the impetus of the struggle without having seen them, not in semblance, but in truth. The rage could not be brought into the studio, but the real action must be there. Meissonier found a strong fellow, and induced him, by a liberal tip, to go down to the studio every day and struggle in the grasp of three others as strong as himself. The man did it; but the positions were so intensely fatiguing that he could never sit, or rather stand, for more than ten minutes at a time. While he was working himself up to imminent apoplexy Meissonier was busy with his pencil. Some few years after the man died very suddenly, and the artist has an uneasy feeling—not at all well founded—that he was remotely the cause of death. Napoleon III. was reproached for giving this masterpiece to an alien. "Why," it was said, "could he not have presented the Prince with a jewel or a horse? A picture by Meissonier is unique, and France is impoverished without remedy by its loss." Nevertheless, one of the largest owners of Meissoniers is an American, but an American who keeps his treasures in Paris—Mr. Hood Stewart, whose collection comprises also the finest of Fortuny's works and the most brilliant of Madrazo's.

Another celebrated out-of-door work is "The Game at Bowls," and yet another, "The Portrait of the Sergeant," a brilliant study of a figure in light. "Napoleon III. at Solferino" was the result of the Italian campaign which M. Meissonier made with the Imperial army for artistic purposes; this picture and "The Emperor and his Staff" represent him in the collection of works by living French artists at the Palace of the Luxembourg. When the Empire which he had illustrated was unwittingly drawing to a close, the great artist again followed the army, this time to the ill-fated fortress of Metz, where he barely escaped sharing the fortunes of the siege by a timely flight to Paris. After this he served as a volunteer until the final peace, sharing in this the patriotism of Regnault, De Neuville, and so many less celebrated but no less valiant artists.

M. Meissonier's conscientiousness is satisfactorily obvious, and proverbial throughout Europe. Those who are inclined to appraise a painter's work by translating its value into its price are fond of telling us at what rate the wonderful French miniaturist in oils works by the square inch; the result of the calculation has escaped our memory, but we believe it shows a sum so considerable that if any one had a fancy for setting a little bit of Meissonier in a ring or scarf-pin, as an enthusiastic artist once wished he could set small pieces of Titian's or Tintoretto's colour, the result would be a *parure* almost as costly as if it were composed of precious stones instead of precious paints.

Nothing like a catalogue of his works is possible here, so numerous are they; but a glance at the prices which a few of them have realised may interest our readers. We translate the francs, and in many cases the dollars, into pounds sterling. "The Amused Cavalier" ($7\frac{1}{4}$ centimètres by 5) sold in New York for



THE VISIT TO THE STUDIO.

£620; "A Dream" for £833; "Soldiers at Cards" (8 centimètres by 10) for £2,300; "The Cavalry Charge" for £6,250; "Marshal Saxe and his Staff" (8 centimètres by 9) for £1,720; and the picture called "1807" was bought by the late Mr. Stewart, of New York, for a sum exceeding £12,500. The last-named work—a striking example of extreme conscientiousness, combined with a lack of dramatic imagination—shows a charge of cuirassiers at what was probably (for the laconic title does not exactly inform us) the battle of Friedland. M. Meissonier was not satisfied with watching the action of cavalry in the momentary manner with which most artists are obliged to content themselves; he had a tramway laid down,

along which he was propelled at the same rate of speed as that of a horse which charged at his side; the artist, keeping up with his model, was able to observe every movement of muscle and sinew. In spite, however, of these infinite pains, the stationary group of "The Emperor and his Staff," drawn up on a neighbouring eminence, is more excellent in truth and nature—as regards the horses at least—than that of the cuirassiers. What is admirable in the latter is the action of the men, who cheer and salute with real impulse, swiftness, and intensity. This is a true picture of war, painted without blood-



IN THE GUARD-HOUSE.

shed, yet without conventionality or insincerity. Another instance of this great artist's laborious observations from Nature is to be found in "The Retreat of Napoleon after the Leipsic Campaign." M. Meissonier is said to have contracted a severe complaint in making his studies from horses which were led to and fro for hours through depths of snow and mud. His reward is that he has drawn a group walking with more truth of action and movement than can perhaps be found in any other picture in the world. It is true that since this was painted Art has been much enlightened, and much worried, by the instantaneous combinations of photography which show the horses' movements as they are, and not as deluded men have imagined that they saw them. The revelation is so unexpected and revolutionary and distressing, that there will be for some time a pause in important paintings of horses galloping or leaping. Happily, the walk had for some time been better understood; several painters, chiefly French, had been painting the truth courageously; but then the truth of a walking horse is by no means grotesque, as the truth of a galloping or leaping horse is to our eyes, it only looks slightly awkward at first to the unaccustomed. Meissonier's eminent merit is that not only has he the movements correct to precision, but he renders the impulse, as it were, the muscular initiative that regulates the movement, as none but a first-class draughtsman could feel it.

It is not *mal à propos* to supplement our own appreciation with that of a singularly just and delicate American critic—Mr. Eugene Benson—who is an equally just and delicate painter. He says: "The little and marvellously elaborated pictures of which Meissonier is still the supreme master in France were unknown as an object to French painters before Meissonier won so much consideration for his successful efforts to represent Nature as seen through the small end of a telescope." But we may pause to remark on Mr. Benson's curious fallacy, which an artist could fall into only by heedlessness, that in painting small, Meissonier paints smaller than he sees with the naked eye. In Art, size does not exist except as a relative thing; that is, it exists merely as *scale*. Meissonier had no need to use the small end of a telescope (to take our author literally) when the whole panorama of heaven and earth was drawn upon the space of his human eye! "His aim," proceeds Mr. Benson, "was a reaction against the dominant masters of his line; by his indefatigable, tenacious talent, his microscopic vision, he was enabled to surpass the Dutch masters in everything but colour. Every form of excellence in Art appeared to have been illustrated in French painting but that of the Dutch school: great political tragedies in Delaroche; military events in Vernet; the drama of the passions in Delacroix; classic art in Ingres; the ideas, fancy, beauty, imagination, pastoral Art—all in a style more or less in direct descent from the great examples of Italian or classic Art. Meissonier, without an idea, without a passion, without anything but a wonderfully trained hand and an uncommon perception of actual objects, applied himself to produce pictures that should 'flabbergast' a public tired of emotions and ideas and revolts,

but interested in everything mechanical and laborious and obviously conscientious. He may be said to be a Dutch painter plus the instruction of the photograph. He was not a pupil of l'École des Beaux Arts; and yet no painter of the Imperial school has carried further the science of his Art, and none is better instructed in the technical means to reach the object of his work." Mr. Eugene Benson goes on to say things that are rather severe, to the effect that Meissonier's pictures interest the mind like clockwork, like the weaving of Egyptian linen, like photographs, like any fine and successful exhibition of the mechanical talent. But in truth and in justice the skill—mental skill of judgment, selection, and method, and visual skill in *seeing* pictorially, as well as mere manual skill—of a painter producing a picture like Meissonier's is of an altogether different order from the skill of the weaver or clockmaker. There is, indeed, a kind of art which is merely handicraft carried farther; that is to be found in some of the detail work of miniature painters and of the Pre-Raphaelites of forty years ago; for there we find no pictorial *seeing*, and no selection or rejection of material. But Mr. Benson's criticism is more to the point when he reproaches Meissonier with giving "no place to woman" in his works. It seems that hardly more than once in his pictures has he represented the female figure. But we would not dwell upon a deficiency which is in a manner a sign of strength. M. Meissonier draws men with a kind of athletic vigour in his little touches which might well be envied by some of our idyllic school. For one Meissonier who paints no women we can name three or four Englishmen who paint no men, and for reasons less creditable to their power. But while we are on this subject, it was surely a strange freak by which a rich American lady chose this painter from all the lady-painting artists of Paris to make her portrait. The result was a famous quarrel, about which many fables have been told, but the simple truth of which is that the lady was not pleased with the picture, and does not show it in her house, and that M. Meissonier received his cheque without the usual accompaniment of praise and thanks.

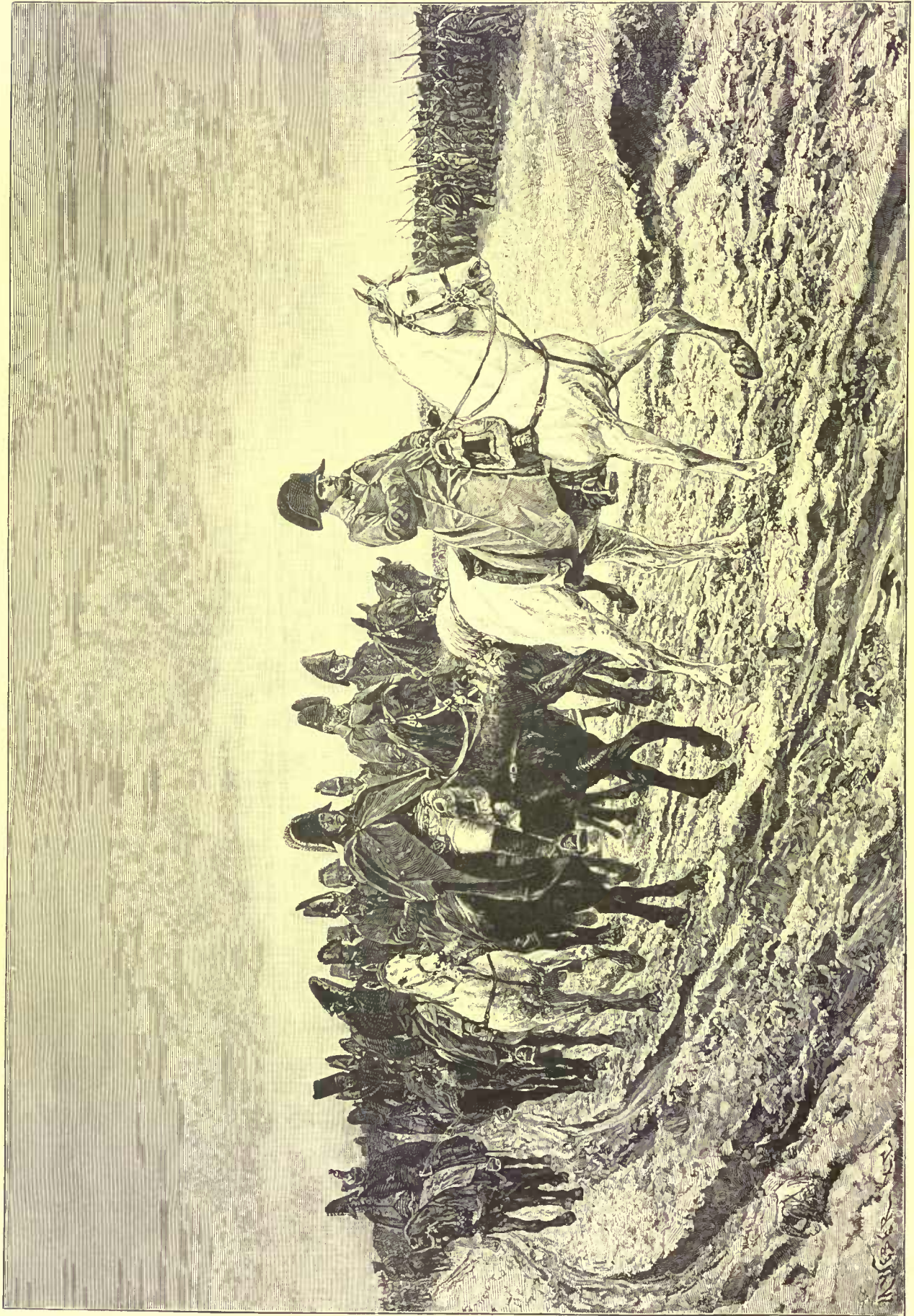
Meissonier has produced a small number of etchings, of which the proofs are extremely rare. They are executed with even a finer point than is generally used by etchers—a veritable "needle." But the effect is large, as with the work of the same hand in painting, and the presentation of surfaces full of fineness and character. The principal etchings are "The Holy Table," "The Violin," "Preparations for the Duel," "Polichinelle," and "Signor Annibale." This medium of artistic expression is well fitted by its precision to show the admirable solidity of the drawing, the *turn* by which the sure line makes us feel the *other side* of an object and the completeness of the perspective. As to Meissonier's vigour in presenting gestures with all the truth and significance of life, and the sure hold on the earth which by this strong drawing he gives to all legs and feet—painting and etching equally display these delightful qualities.

We have all made a thorough acquaintance with the artist's house as understood

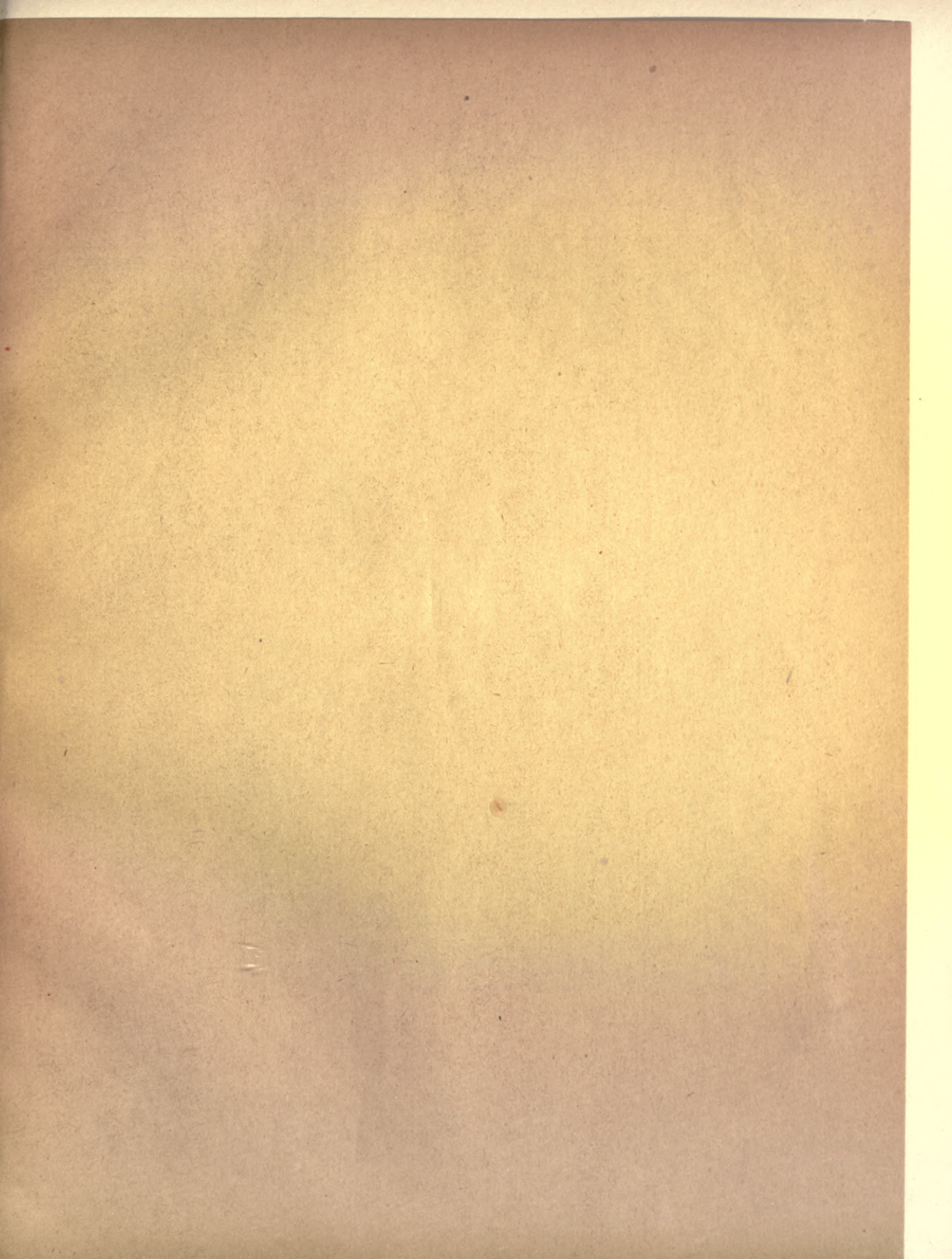
in England; in M. Meissonier's hôtel near the Parc Monceau we have an artist's house after the manner of Paris, and perhaps the most complete of its kind. The quarter in which it stands is dear to successful art, literature, and drama. Many great Frenchmen have kept the simple tastes and the unworldly ways which distinguished French genius for some generations. But when an artist does wish to build himself a lordly pleasure-house, he builds it not far from the Boulevard Malesherbes and the Avenue de Villiers. The palaces there are accordingly various — Moorish, Swiss, Spanish, or what not; Meissonier's abode is altogether Italian Renaissance. Its chief exterior character is the absolutely precise joining and fitting, for it was his hobby to have stone laid upon stone throughout the construction with as much perfection as a joiner achieves in a delicate bit of inlaying. The large courtyard within the carriage gates opens on to an arched terrace—a "loggia," which suggests Italian sun. From the courtyard, too, a columned vestibule and a staircase lined with fine carvings lead to the enormous studio in which the little pictures are painted — or rather where they are supposed to be painted, for M. Meissonier does his work most frequently in a smaller room adjoining. The large atelier has the dimensions of a state assembly-room rather than of an ordinary hall, even though intended for public purposes. Its walls are panelled with carving, like the staircase. From the studio we may walk out on a terrace, which, in the Italian manner, forms the roof of the arcade below. In the whole design, and in every part—in the back staircase and in the stables as well as in the grand approach and the state rooms—the style has been entirely preserved, no ornament being out of date, while the effects of outline by which the Renaissance architects made their best successes have been specially studied. In all this the artist and



POLICHINELLE.



NAPOLEON IN RUSSIA





Meissonier pinx.

P. le Rat, Sculp.

THE VEDETTE.

owner has been his own architect, furnishing designs not only for the whole construction, but for every cornice and moulding, for every bit of architectural "detail," and for every cupboard door. It was altogether an occupation of years, which divided his time with his easel work. As it stands, the hotel is a monument to a great painter's liberal knowledge in another art, to his devotion to the idea of entirely perfect workmanship, and to his determination to have his heart's desire. Though the style is by no means a solemn one, there is undoubtedly something almost of solemnity in the slow, solid, and delicate construction, stone by stone, of a house into literally every inch of which an artist's deliberate and thoughtful care has entered, and which will stand—if time alone attacks it—for many generations without the displacement, by so much as a half-inch of "settling," of a single course of its masonry.

M. Meissonier has, besides this Paris palace, a country house at Poissy, which has been well described in the *World*. "Here," says the writer, "he lives in the summer-time with his son, who

is now out in the world of art, for his neighbour. There are two studios at Poissy, one at the top of the house, the other adjoining the stable, for use in inclement weather. At Poissy Meissonier is something more than an artist—a municipal ruler, and he is believed to aspire to the high office of mayor. He missed it on one occasion by an unfortunate dispute with his colleagues. Whatever he may have been at one period of his life, he is now understood to be a very good Republican. But there are men living who believe they have seen him in the cocked hat and green embroidery of some office of honour under the Empire.



A MADRIGAL.

They may be mistaken. He made quite a gallant stand against the authors of the '16th May,' when their restrictions on the freedom of the press threatened to deprive him of his daily paper. The *salon* at Poissy has those quaint little square windows which so often figure in the backgrounds of his pictures. He built the country house as he built the house in town, and he fitted it up with artistic luxuriance, designing most of the furniture himself, notably the silver services of the table. Each place has cost him something in millions. The bill for the house in Paris has been augmented by his resolution to have all the work of the very best. He takes a peculiar pride in the thoroughness of the mechanical part of it. This is a costly pleasure, or, say, an ingenious device for getting rid of superfluities of fortune. Without Poissy and Paris poor Meissonier might be troubled by too-rapidly-accumulating millions. It is estimated that he has at least two of these numerical burdens on his shoulders in the shape of unfinished commissions in his studio at this present time."

In these beautiful abodes Meissonier's life is extremely simple. He has his son for his most intimate friend, his married daughter for his most frequent hostess, and new acquaintances are said to have been generally discouraged by his shyness. A French writer has expressed his surprise at finding so famous a man diffident, nervous, and showing signs of depression which were less for anything in his own lot than for the then comparatively recent misfortunes of his country. In fact, Meissonier has made those disasters his own by a *naïf* and innocent kind of vanity quite peculiar to the artistic, or, rather, to the painter's, temperament. The English writer above quoted says, with an amusing exaggeration:—"He cannot altogether dissociate the German invasion from a suspicion of German jealousy of his works. The Germans had not only a grudge against France on the Rhine question, but they had a grudge against Meissonier as one of the glories of French art. They could not forgive him his masterpieces, and so they came to Paris. They won their great victories for the malicious pleasure of depriving him of a subject. He had followed the Italian campaign under Napoleon III. to get materials; and when this last and fatal struggle broke out he set forth with the army that was finally shut up at Metz. He shared the light heart of M. Ollivier until the Germans began to gather round Bazaine, and then his friends began to fear he would have to share the captivity of the army. The officers saw the full extent of the danger, and implored him to remove from a situation to which he was bound by no obligation of duty."

For some time the world was threatened with a result of the painter's patriotic feeling and experiences in the shape of a great allegorical picture, in which prostrate France, with the body of the young artist, Regnault, across her breast, was to be bleeding under the talons of a German eagle. We say "threatened" because this kind of rhetorical art, which such an allegory represents, is altogether opposed to Meissonier's sincere and strenuous power. Nor would it be worthy of his dignity to enter upon colossal painting as a reply to the carpers who have declared that he

could not paint unless he painted small. Nevertheless, like most artists who are artists *de tempérament*, he is sensitive to slighting remarks of that nature. He has even now and then chosen the motives of his pictures with the object of silencing them. It had been said, for instance, that he could paint individuals and incidents, but that he was incapable of historical work in any great sense—work that worthily renders nations and periods. Meissonier's answer was his "Diderot," which did in fact give the age of the Encyclopædists in the group of readers and listeners to a new piece of the eighteenth-century literature. Moreover, when it was said that Meissonier could not paint out of doors—that ordeal of the modern French talent—he was moved to produce his "Portrait of the Sergeant," where the figure is in the open air, surrounded, involved, and overflowed with daylight. As to size, the largest canvas we know of Meissonier's having ever painted is the "Choix du Modèle," still a small picture for anybody else.

One of M. Meissonier's artistic hobbies is in his choice of models. He has a theory, which we would recommend to the attention of other painters, that each period of the world's history has developed its own specialised type; and that an artist who fixes upon a certain epoch of the past for illustration should wait until he gets a model who has by chance "reverted" (to borrow a word from Darwinism) to the type desired. In planning an eighteenth-century subject, you should look about for an eighteenth-century face, and if you cannot find one, let the subject stand over. Furthermore, says Meissonier in effect, having got your eighteenth-century man, and given him an eighteenth-century occupation, leave him to take his own attitude or strike his own action; he will do it in the right way, for the physique, as we all know, suggests the *pose*. Men with a certain shape of shoulders, for instance, take attitudes which men made otherwise would never fall into. But a difficulty arises. A right position for the model's occupation is not always a pictorial position, or right for the painter's composition. What is the artist to do? To dictate to his model, and interfere with that eighteenth-century impulse which is so valuable? Nine hundred and ninety-nine painters out of a thousand would answer Yes. Or it would be more just to say that *all* the painters in the world, except M. Meissonier, would answer Yes. Meissonier, however, insists that the artist is bound to be patient, to wait, to dodge round his model in ceaseless and unwearying watchfulness until the right *pose* is taken up naturally. If he merely puts a man to play chess, he must let the man play chess in precisely his own way until the movement is hit which suits the picture. Another difficulty; too often the right attitude becomes fatigued, and loses its freshness and impetus after a few moments of real sitting. In order to keep that first irrecoverable touch of nature, Meissonier takes a rapid sketch of the model first of all—a slight, stenographic kind of sketch, in which, nevertheless, the sure hand of the draughtsman makes the lines absolutely right. From this sketch, full of vitality as it is, and with the help of reference to the sitter, Meissonier makes a model in wax, and carefully corrects it. From the wax model he draws the figure on canvas; and from the sketch, the wax, and the sitter, he completes

the work. Surely no better way could be devised for keeping the initial freshness and *entrain* of the life in combination with the completeness that nothing but time can achieve. Thus he watches the man, whom he could command, but will not, just as carefully and patiently as he watches the horse, whose paces no one can control or force out of the order of Nature. This faculty of observation, which implies powers of both eye and mind, is one of the chief things that have gone to the making of Meissonier.

Of the thoroughness which all this argues, the studio in the Paris house witnesses curious instances. There is now and then a little crowd of dealers and connoisseurs in the room, bidding against one another like men at an auction, for the picture which stands unfinished on the easel. Sometimes the dispute waxes almost into a quarrel, and the master works on unmoved, and in the course of his labours takes up a palette-knife and wipes away, perhaps, the principal figure of a group which has been the subject of contention as a thing almost beyond price. There is a cry of horror. But the master knows precisely why the thing deserved condemnation at the most critical of bars—that of his own sincere judgment; and nothing could have saved the work as nothing can restore it.

M. Meissonier's appearance is that of a man who has seen rough service, whether with the rifle or with the palette in hand. He is weather-beaten, but the wind and weather have raised more colour in his cheeks than is usual among his countrymen, and hard work has not thinned his strongly-built, short figure, with its strong balance and energetic movement. The eyes are singularly full of brilliant and vivid life, and keep their youth in spite of all signs of age elsewhere. So does his work, which, after all these years, is the work of a man in his prime.





J. L. E. Meissonier, pinx^t.

G. Richard, sculpt^r.

THE PAINTER



*Yours faithfully
Louise Jopling*

(From a Photograph by Mons. A. Boucher, Brighton.)

LOUISE JOPLING.

IF we may suppose that the artistic faculty is divided with fair equality between men and women, experience certainly forbids us to believe that success in any of the arts lies as readily within the reach of the weaker as of the stronger sex. Potential artists may, and in fact do, abound among women, but a thousand causes are at work to prevent the executive fulfilment of their promises. A poet has ventured to question, or at least to wonder at, the Providence which creates "a vain capacity;" and in truth, when we consider that unemployed power is not merely a waste but a source of pain to its possessor, we should find it hard to understand the rich,

significant, and yet abortive gifts which are given to women, if we did not remember the all-important female vocation of transmission, which may solve the riddle. That remarkable men have had remarkable mothers is a truism, and those who repeat it do so without much commiseration for the women of genius who have, in all time of the world's history, bequeathed their latent art, their science, their philosophy—that is to say, their large capacity for these things—to after-times and to the emancipated executive faculties of their sons. In those rare cases, however, in which a woman succeeds in her own person, she proves herself to be mistress of a higher success than would be a man's in the achievement of like results; and if she actually reaches an eminence at which the indulgence granted to her weakness and her obstacles ceases among critics, and when she can permit herself to re-echo what Mrs. Browning says in one of her letters to Mr. Horne—"You will please to recollect that when I talk of women I do not speak of them (as many men do) according to a separate, peculiar, and womanly standard, but according to the common standard of human nature"—then, indeed, a rich and particular homage Justice itself may pay to her.

And the lady whose name stands at the head of this article has been exceptionally weighted, even among a sex so heavily handicapped. Rosa Bonheur had an artist-father; Elizabeth Butler and Clara Montalba had their artistic faculty fostered by the best masters here and abroad, and by the sympathetic taste of their parents, from their childhood upwards. But Louise Jopling did not learn to draw until she was twenty-three. During those pliant years which are so precious for training, her art-talent had been hidden, and was brought to surface only by one of those apparent accidents to which we owe so many painters, from the days of Giotto until now. Mrs. Jopling's Cimabue—encountered, not on Florentine hills, but in a Paris *salon*—was the Baroness Nathaniel de Rothschild, herself an artist, some of whose water-colour work our readers will remember at the Grosvenor Gallery exhibitions. Mrs. Jopling was wont to make little sketches of her friends, and the Baroness having seen these, and perceived the power that lay behind them only waiting to be trained, urged her forthwith to begin artistic work in good earnest; which she did.

Hitherto the embryo artist's life had been uneventful enough as regards the outer world. But the personal history of nearly all conspicuous persons is so closely interwoven with their public careers that its apparently trivial details are often significant; and Mrs. Jopling's, when it comes to be written, will probably be found to have exercised an even more than ordinary influence on her artistic labours and aims. Born in November, 1843, Louise Goode was one of a family of nine. Early left an orphan, she became Mrs. Romer before she was out of her teens, her husband holding the post of secretary to Baron Nathaniel de Rothschild in Paris when the incidents already related, to which she owes her professional career, so happily occurred. Taking to heart the hints of her friend, she betook herself to the studio of M. Chaplin (the master, by the way, of another distinguished lady artist, Henriette Browne) in the January of 1867. Under his tutelage Mrs. Romer continued for

sixteen months, for the first twelve confining herself to drawings, two of which—heads in chalk—were exhibited in the Salon of 1868. After only the final four months' handling of the brush she returned to England, and there painted her maiden work, entitled "Consolation," showing two girls, one with her head resting on the shoulder of the other. This was sent to the Academy, was there marked "doubtful" by the Selecting Committee, and finally was not hung. Nothing daunted, the rejected of 1870 tried to be, and was, the accepted of 1871, with her "Bud and Bloom," a maiden in her early teens carrying a pot of azaleas, full blown. In the same year, acting on the advice of Mr. Frith, who held it to be excellent practice to portray one's own self, Mrs. Romer painted her own likeness (life-size), which was exhibited in Bond Street, not far from the spot where, less than ten years later, her masterly portrait by Mr. Millais attracted its crowd.

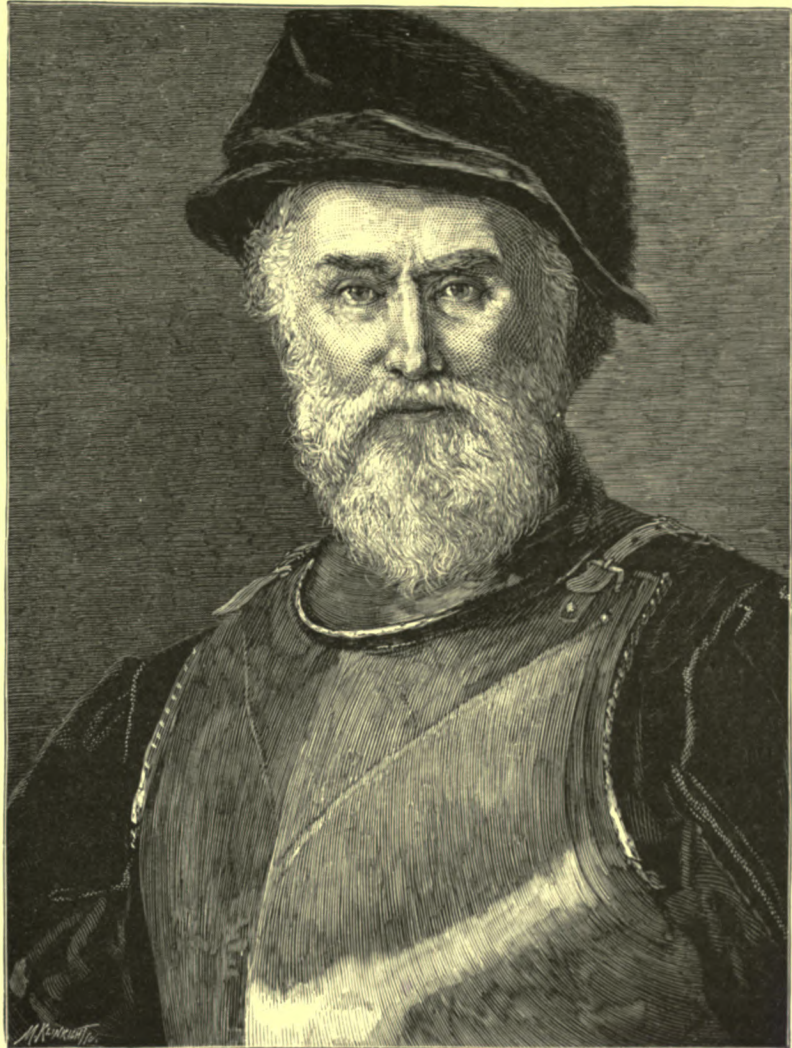
Mrs. Romer had risen with almost unexampled rapidity from the rank of the amateur and the student to that of the proficient and the professional; and henceforth she progressed at the same rate. Beginning her course with a run, she has never slackened her speed, except when illness or bereavement has forced her to a temporary pause. Each year in succession has its own achievement. In 1871 (being three years of age, artistically speaking, at the time) she had three pictures in the Academy. One of these "In Memoriam," showing some flowers scattered on a pall, bore tender reference to the death of one of the artist's children in that year; while a second was a charming head, which was painted from her sister, and of which Mr. Tom Taylor became the possessor—a purchase from so eminent an art-critic fairly taking rank among the successes of Mrs. Romer's early career. In 1872 she had again three pictures at Burlington House, where also she had two—both portraits—in the following year.

At this date occurred an event—the death of her first husband—which, while it belongs to Mrs. Romer's history as a woman, intimately affects her history as an artist, throwing her, as it did, more entirely on her own exertion, and augmenting her professional zeal. Not less important to her art was another domestic event—her second marriage, in 1874, to Mr. Joseph Middleton Jopling, who, though then holding a post at the Horse Guards, and albeit a crack shot, having won the Queen's Prize at Wimbledon, the St. George's, and many other prizes, was known also to the world as a painter; and if he called himself an amateur in his wife's profession, his brother artists and the public had long ceased to consider him as such. As a water-colour painter he held a prominent position, having been for some years a member of the Water-Colour Institute, at one of whose exhibitions his well-known "Fluffy"—representing a girl, life-size, holding up a dog—was *par excellence* among the drawings of its year. A little later Mr. Jopling took up caricature, and did regular work for one of the quasi-comic papers. But for a considerable time he devoted himself to flowers, with an occasional portrait, Miss Ellen Terry being among his sitters. After some ten years of marriage Mr. Jopling died almost suddenly, leaving his wife to her second widowhood, with only one son living of the many children she had hoped to rear.



FIVE O'CLOCK TEA.

The question, "Should artists marry?" has often been asked, especially in the case of lady artists, without, however, eliciting any uniform or definite answer. Three Presidents of the Royal Academy have set an example of celibacy—Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir Thomas Lawrence, and Sir Frederick Leighton. The first of these, as we all know, not only practised but somewhat roughly preached, bachelorhood, telling Flaxman, on his marriage with Anne Dolman, that he would be ruined as an artist. Whether the ill-natured prediction came from Reynolds as a rejected suitor, who would have married Angelica Kauffmann if he could, we need not stop to inquire—at any rate it turned out, in the case of the great sculptor, to be incorrect. Raphael, it is true, died unmarried, at the age of thirty-seven, but he was an affianced lover at the time. To those who are still in doubt about the right reply to the vital query, we would recommend the perusal of the elder Leslie's autobiography and letters, perhaps the happiest record of a married



COLONEL THE HONOURABLE CHARLES HUGH LINDSAY.

life yet written; nor do we think it would be difficult to trace an increase of power, as well as an added industry, in the works of almost all our living artists who have followed the old poet's prescription for doubling life's joys and halving its troubles. This prepares us for the fact that from the time of her marriage with one who shared her own artistic taste, Mrs. Jopling dated an increase in her reputation.

In the Academy of 1874, the year of her second marriage, appeared her first important subject-picture, the "Five o'Clock Tea," which we engrave. The artist seized the prevailing fancy for Japanese life, Japanese dress, and Japanese *bric-à-brac*, and

turned it to good account on this canvas, every detail of which (except, perhaps, the character of one or two of the fairer faces) is faithful to the quaint reality, and as full of local colour as an Oriental scene painted in England can be. The group is well composed, and the costume—so graceful, yet so foreign and fresh to European ideas of grace—is cleverly treated, with well-drawn, broad, and simple forms of drapery. A smaller work, “*La Japonaise*,” was exhibited at the same time; and in the following year appeared “*Elaine*” and “*A Modern Cinderella*”—a girl who may be supposed to be a painter’s model, and who turns her back to hang up the gorgeous salmon-coloured robe (matched by a little shoe of the same tint) in which she has been posing. She wears the petticoat and chemise of every-day life, and her equally commonplace gown lies beside her on a chair. This picture we remember to have seen catalogued in a comic paper as “*A Lady Artist R.A.-ing Herself*.” The same year saw the completion of a large canvas, “*The Five Sisters of York*,” which has since been to the Philadelphia Exhibition, has received a bronze medal at the Crystal Palace, and was afterwards sent to Sydney. The subject was taken from an episodic story told in one of Dickens’s books. The five fair damsels are sitting at their fancy-work under the trees of a sunny and shady orchard, listening with not much docility to the ascetic preaching of a friar. Two fancy heads and a portrait of Miss de Rothschild, now Mrs. Cyril Flower, represented Mrs. Jopling at Burlington House in 1876; and in 1877 four portraits, one of which, “*Colonel the Honourable Charles Lindsay*,” wearing armour and a black velvet Henry VIII. cap, is the subject of our smaller illustration; while another, “*Gertrude, Daughter of George Lewis, Esq.*,” was a child-delineation of singular charm, which was subsequently shown at the Salon.

The year 1877 will long be memorable in London as that in which the dream of a patron of the arts—or, rather, we should say *two* patrons, for Lady Lindsay’s name will be linked with that of her husband in this splendid enterprise—found a fulfilment in the opening of the Grosvenor Gallery. Several fine artists came out of the retirement by which they had for years protested against the ways of the Royal Academy and the Water-Colour Societies. And many painters, less conspicuous in their withdrawal, found in the Grosvenor a field where they showed to more advantage than in larger crowds. Mrs. Jopling’s “*It Might Have Been*” was one of the attractions of its first exhibition. It is remarkable for the sweetness of the face and for the very complete painting of all the accessories of the pretty room depicted. Also to the Grosvenor, in 1878, she sent her beautiful “*Pity is akin to Love*,” as well as a portrait of “*Miss Evelina de Rothschild*” feeding pigeons. At the Academy Mrs. Jopling was represented by “*Weary Waiting*,” a pretty interior, with a lady dreaming over the sketch of an Arctic ship as she sits in a Chippendale chair, with her sacque tea-gown charmingly arranged, and her little girl conning picture-books at her feet; and she also painted for Lord Beaconsfield’s gallery a portrait of Sir Nathaniel de Rothschild, which, in deference to the sitter’s wishes, was not publicly exhibited.



"IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN."

(Drawn on the Wood by Mrs. Jopling.)

In the following year our artist's Academy picture had one of the pathetic subjects which she has frequently treated; her "Village Maid" sits by the spring at which the women of some Southern French hamlet fill their jars. The girl has set one water-vessel under the little sluice-conducted streamlet, and leans her head against the other, while her heart is far away, so that the water overfills the pitcher and runs unheededly away. The simply-drawn figure is made effective by broad effects in the white draperies, apron, cap, and sleeve-linings. An aloe, growing behind, tells of the South, as does the dark comeliness of the girl's face. With this was a striking portrait of Mrs. James Tomkinson. In 1880 came "Ophelia;" in 1882 a portrait of Sir Robert Anstruther and "Auld Robin Gray." At the Grosvenor in the following year Mrs. Jopling exhibited a portrait, to which she gave the name of "Summer Snow," representing a young and charming woman with white hair; the greys throughout—in the delicate flesh, in the lace and pearls with which it was harmonised, and in the hair—were very ably treated. In the same exhibition was a full-length portrait of Miss Ellen Terry as Portia, clad in her scarlet doctor's gown. The actress stands with the parchment in her hand, at the moment when she gives Shylock his last chance, saying, "Bid me tear the bond." The next year bore the fruit of a visit to Venice, for Mrs. Jopling, after a season there among a group of busy painters, contributed "From my Gondola" to the Grosvenor Gallery, with two portraits and an ideal head. And to the same period, approximately, belongs "A Fair Venetian," in the title of which Mrs. Jopling intended to draw attention to the blonde hair and fair skin which are familiar among the Gothic Italians of the North-East. Thus Mrs. Jopling was among the many painters who of late years have fallen under the spell, half real, half fictitious, of the famous and much-painted Venetian girl.

"Salome Carrying the Head of St. John the Baptist to her Mother, Herodias," was not a dramatic scene, but a study of the single figure of the young woman, with her arm over the dish, her tambourine in the other hand, and her long, crisp, red hair tossed over her shoulders. In 1885 Mrs. Jopling sent to the Academy "Broken Off," a subject of sentiment inspired by the line—

"Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind."

Such is, in part, the record of a busy life—a record which, even when we have included frequent contributions to the Dudley Gallery Exhibitions, both in oil and in water-colours, and to the Ladies' Society, is still incomplete. Nor should we omit to mention here that the pages of various periodicals have been graced by papers from Mrs. Jopling's pen, her talent being by no means confined to art, but extending to literature and to music as well.



THE FARMER'S DAUGHTER.

(From the Painting by W. Q. Orchardson, R.A.)



*Your very truly
W. Q. Orchardson*

WILLIAM QUILLER ORCHARDSON, R.A.

WHEN a British artist develops his own personality steadily, singly, and naturally, he does so in spite of heavy odds. The system of training under which he studies is altogether against him. He learns his art in a school with a motley crowd of fellows, and under a set of teachers who are motley also; and precisely because of this confusion of characters, abilities, and methods, a routine is enforced which, while it prevents complete artistic anarchy, effectually cramps individual character. In a crowd of scholars no teacher has the time, and in a crowd of teachers no teacher has the interest, to study and foster the learner's personality. Mr. Orchardson was subjected when quite young to that national system of art-education which may be said to drill, but not to discipline, the student. From his earliest years, however, he had some clear idea of the way he wished to go, and from that way routine was not able to turn him, although it did succeed in making him suffer the pains which a by no means self-confident boy must needs endure when he opposes his masters. He is placed at a disadvantage so great that a very little wit suffices

to make a really good joke at his expense; and as all are or have been young, we need say nothing to our readers as to the sensitiveness of youth to ridicule, witty or not. Entering the Trustees' Academy at Edinburgh, at the age of fifteen, the young student set to work with good will and exceptional ability. He must have felt the irksomeness of the ordinary routine of the place; for he hastened his own admission into "the Antique," jumping one of the preliminary stages, an irregularity which was silently condoned. In the Trustees' Academy, as at Burlington House and elsewhere, the masters teach in rotation, and work at will upon their pupils' canvases, a habit which is not ill-calculated to confuse the learner's aims and wishes in the rare chance of his having any such; while if, like the majority, he has none, he is at all events convinced of the variations of authorities and the general fallibility of systems. Mr. Orchardson's early experience in this matter so impressed him with the necessity for a reform in the national manner of teaching, that he has, we believe, lately excused himself from being a visitor at our own Royal Academy schools.

It is certain that a young student who should have developed a mannerism in the days when he could not yet have formed a style, would have been all the better and none the worse for a fair amount of "chaff" from his instructors. Mr. Orchardson, however, had no such unwholesome prematurities. He had the primal artistic gift of seeing nature pictorially—a gift which is so great and so sufficient that it may well take the place of systems and manners and methods of teaching and learning—and his one wish was to be allowed to represent singly, simply, and straightforwardly what he saw. His art was altogether natural and healthy, and had no premeditation about it. Precious as a distinct personality is, it is precious on these terms only. So unconscious, indeed, was the young artist of the manner he employed in his direct representation of Nature, that when he exhibited his first picture at the Royal Scottish Academy, and received warm congratulations on every hand as to its "breadth," he did not know what the quality was for which he was receiving so much praise; and it was only after considering the matter that he found it consisted simply in distinguishing clearly that which belongs to light from that which belongs to shade—that is, in the sincere painting of things as he saw them. Here, of course, and unconsciously to the artist himself, his gift of seeing pictorially was that which stamped his work with "breadth," and with all the other distinctive merits it possessed.

His first picture was painted during the course of Mr. Orchardson's studies in the Life class. It was hung on the line, and its success gave the young student no small encouragement. He continued to exhibit in his native city of Edinburgh until he had reached the age of about eight-and-twenty, when, in 1863, he made that move to London by which alone an artist is able to measure himself fairly with all his fellows of Great Britain. He began his Royal Academy career at once with "An Old English Song" and portraits of three young ladies, followed by "Flowers of the Forest" and "Hamlet and Ophelia." His first very marked

English success was obtained by "The Challenge," a picture which gained the prize offered by Mr. Wallis in 1865, and which was exhibited in the French Gallery in Pall Mall. By some chance Mr. Orchardson scarcely profited by the general fame which his work commanded; for the *Times* gave an eulogium to the brilliant picture, and spoke of it throughout as Mr. Pettie's; and the mistake has probably been the cause of a slight confusion between the works of the two artists (who were fellow-students before they were fellow Academicians, and always friends), whereas those works are alike in a few points, but widely different in many.

Mr. Orchardson's place in British art and his name among British artists were now assured; and the Paris International of 1867 soon after gave him the opportunity of gaining something more than insular suffrage. His success in Paris was signal. Every International Exhibition has of necessity a huge husk of officialism. Honours are awarded upon a system which is almost political, and certainly diplomatic. It is perhaps only given to those upon the spot to find out the heart of the matter. But the artists and critics of Paris in 1867 knew that there was one name (among others) not formally only but vitally illustrious; and the half-puzzled, half-supercilious attitude which Continental criticism was apt to maintain in face of English art was exchanged, in Mr. Orchardson's case, for a complete, respectful cordiality; his most striking picture at Paris being, by the way, that same "Challenge" which had made so brilliant and early a success here. Meantime his work in England was not flagging. In 1866 he had exhibited the "Story of a Life"—a nun recounting her experience to a group of young novices—and in 1867, "Talbot and the Countess of Auvergne."

The year 1868 was that of Mr. Orchardson's election to the Associateship of the Royal Academy, when he painted his "Scene from Shakespeare's 'Henry IV.'" Then came in succession "The Duke's Ante-chamber," "On the Grand Canal," "A Hundred Years Ago," "Casus Belli," "The Forest Pet," "Cinderella," "The Protector," "Hamlet and the King," "Ophelia," "Too Good to be True," "Moonlight on the Lagoons," "The Bill of Sale," and "Flotsam and Jetsam." These were all at the Royal Academy; and to other exhibitions—Mr. Wallis's, for instance, and that useful little yearly gallery, long defunct, the British Institution—he contributed a "Scene from the 'Gentle Shepherd,'" "Christopher Sly," "Choosing a Weapon," "The Virtuoso," "The Salutation." To the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition he sent "Prince Henry, Poins, and Falstaff;" and at the Paris International of 1878 he was represented by "The Queen of the Swords," "Escaped," "The Bill of Sale," and "The Duke's Ante-chamber."

In 1876 Mr. Orchardson's Academy pictures included a portrait of a child, which was very striking in its broad and massive simplicity of colouring and lighting; the face was an unusual one, with a peculiarity of eyelids drooping at the outer corners, producing somewhat strange character for a child. In 1877, when the artist was elected an Academician, appeared "The Queen of the Swords," which is the subject of one of our woodcuts, and was the first of the more purely



THE QUEEN OF THE SWORDS.
(By Permission of J. Glas Sandeman, Esq., Glasgow.)

elegant last-century and first-empire subjects to which the artist seems to be turning his attention. He has, indeed, such exquisite grace, not of line merely, but of execution, that his pencil is well employed in the subtly-coloured, quaintly-fashioned phases of bygone ball-room life. "The Queen of the Swords" is even more broad (for Mr. Orchardson must not object to be wearied with that earliest adjective of his public praises) than usual, the colour is refined and has a diffused warm whiteness, and the figures move with a certain quietness and dignity not without charm, if somewhat lacking in gaiety. To our mind, nevertheless, his best work in the same Academy was his "Jessica," a strikingly-treated picture, painted in a flat light, with strong massive effects about the head and hair, and excellent drawing in the face—altogether a figure to arrest attention and command admiration. A marked advance and addition, however, seems to us to have been made in Mr. Orchardson's painting in 1878, when the "Social Eddy" and "Autumn" were exhibited. His colour, always tender and strong, seemed now to take an added beauty, delicacy, and exquisiteness, for the like of which contemporary work may be explored in vain. It is more than pretty, and more than brilliant; it is also curiously original, having been studied in no school and learned by no rules. In "Autumn," for instance, the painting of a subtle soft muslin garment worn by a girl is consummately delicate, the tints being almost visionary passages of pearl. The fineness of these tones and colours is, in this instance, made more valuable by a surrounding yellowness which would seem, however, to be a somewhat strained interpretation of nature. "A Social Eddy—Left by the Tide" is one of the artist's loveliest works. Whatever there is of artificial in his later manner is easily condoned when we have a lamplight scene, as in the present instance; and this most felicitous little picture unites with all the pleasure it gives to the eye an equally keen pleasure which it gives to the mind by its exquisite intelligence. All the graces of the early century seem to be expressed in the action of the couples as they retreat to the dance—the men high-shouldered and with an artificial outline not devoid of elegance; the ladies slim, long-limbed, and with the pretty napes of their necks displayed by the lifted hair. As to the character of the elderly couple, curled and rouged, who are exchanging compliments on an ottoman, it is of the finest kind of comedy, while the figure of a girl whom fate has so cruelly left without a partner is full of charm. The panelled walls, the floor, the furniture, are painted up to a point of soft brilliancy which, perhaps, can best be appreciated by a glance at any picture unfortunate enough to be near this killing little canvas.

Similar in elegance was the next year's "Hard Hit," a gambling scene not altogether fresh in subject, but freshly treated in Mr. Orchardson's composition. A slender young man is making his exit from the scene of his misfortune, while his fellow-gamblers, whose expressions vary from a look of good-humoured encouragement to one of perfectly heartless satisfaction, remain seated, and show the effects of a hard night's play. Cards are strewn in great numbers on the floor. The scene is not intended to convey tragic emotions, and the young victim has his feelings well

under control. Eminently graceful is the composition even in the absence of the female figure.

It was in 1880, however, that Mr. Orchardson entered upon work which was probably more masculine and more serious than anything he had yet attempted. His "Napoleon on Board the *Bellerophon*" has all the dignity of historical painting, which is something different from mere historical *genre*. The choice of subject is especially to be commended. For it is an indisputable fact that of late our better painters have inclined overmuch to the feminine interest, leaving subjects of more pith to hands scarcely able to cope with them. Nowadays the novelist must write for a majority of women; the minor poet must bear them in mind in his singing; and the modern composer, still more decidedly, in his composing; but the painter can surely appeal to the world for which epics and dramas are made—that is, the world of large and general interests; for everybody cares for pictures, and the number of his constituents sets an artist free—as free as Shakespeare. It is, then, somewhat to be regretted that much of our best modern talent should have bound itself with voluntary restrictions. Mr. Orchardson's subject has, besides its masculine and general interest, the great advantage of treating an historical incident which is so well within memory that his picture has the value of a contemporary record. Our pictures of the historical incidents of long ago may be interesting enough to ourselves, but they certainly will have no manner of value in the eyes of our posterity, whereas a record made in 1880 of the events of 1815 is not too tardy to have its authority for the people of 1950. In the "Napoleon," which was emphatically the picture of the year at the Academy, of course the peculiar sweetness and charm of colour of which we have spoken had no place—for historical work should not be too exquisite in colour; but it was finely harmonious, mellow, and massive.

From this year forward Mr. Orchardson has become continually more conspicuous. His work has given a certain *cachet* to the duller of Academies. When the walls have been loaded with deliberate and lifeless work—by no means without merit, but decidedly without interest—the few pictures which have had any kind of unity, spirit, and *ensemble*, have always included (and often as the most important of the number) a canvas of Mr. Orchardson's. This has been the case even when he has exhibited little or nothing but portraits. In 1881 his best work was the portrait of Mrs. Winchester Clowes, a golden picture of a lady in a light dress, seated. In the following year he contributed to the Academy a graceful little *genre* subject—"Housekeeping in the Honeymoon." But the great success of a very successful career dates from the painting of the brilliant "Voltaire." It is a banquet scene in radiant lamplight, on which the philosopher, just stung by an insult, enters in bitter indignation, carelessly received. The diners preserve their repose of manner unruffled, and there is a dramatic contrast of action and expression. But the interest of the groups is marred by the common modern fault of repeating one model. In his anxiety to keep the type of the period (and every period undoubtedly has its type),

the artist has confined himself almost absolutely to one face; he has certainly run one nose through the whole assemblage. The picture, however, is exceptionally accomplished, and the painting of all the accessories most complete and vivid. The "Voltaire," hung in one of the two chief places of honour of the Academy, attracted the most lively attention given to any picture that year. Soon afterwards appeared the "Mariage de Convenance," again a lamplight dinner scene, but this time with



A SOCIAL EDDY—LEFT BY THE TIDE.

(By Permission of A. Macdonald, Esq., Kepplestone, Aberdeen.)

two figures seated at the table—the worn and rather melancholy man “between two ages,” and the buxom young woman who has been allotted to him in the parental counsels. They sit together, in evening dress, in a state of silent protest, with the bride’s face blackened by a cloud of furious ill-temper. Here also the technique and the illumination are masterly. But Mr. Orchardson was ill-advised to produce a sequel. Sequels are never good in the higher artistic sense. They suppose a childish desire in the public to know “what happened next,” which no painter should care to satisfy. As to the interest which should legitimately be taken in the subject of a picture, it is far keener for the suspense, for the recognition of the limitations of pictorial rendering. The prophecy in the “Mariage de Convenance,” besides,

was so exceedingly stormy, that no addition of tragedy is made by showing us the husband by his fireside, abandoned. This is what Mr. Orchardson does, in fact, present to us in his "Mariage de Convenance—After!" The middle-aged bridegroom meditates, seated in profile, in complete desolation, upon the mistake of his maturity. Whatever may be his misfortunes, his personality is not such as we greatly care to continue acquaintance with through the space of two Exhibitions.

In 1885 Mr. Orchardson chose a good subject—a scene in a French salon, thus described:—

"The salon of Mme. Récamier included all sections of society as reconstituted after the Revolution. Not only the scattered elements of the old aristocracy, but also the new men of talent, all met at her house, from a common admiration of their young and beautiful hostess. The Duc de Montmorency, M. de Narbonne, Mme. de Staël, and others who had returned from exile, were received there at the same time with Lucien Bonaparte, Fouché, Bernadotte, Sièyes, Gérard, Canova, and others. 'The repose of her manner made her sympathy more effective.' She was a good listener. 'Bien écouter c'est presque répondre,' quotes Jean Paul; and Sainte Beuve says that Mme. Récamier listened 'avec séduction.'"

The artist has filled his canvas with a most elegant group, cleverly and charmingly composed, so that the numbers represented do not interfere with the space that leads up to and encloses the queen of the gathering, as she sits in her beauty, with the full-length figure displayed. Almost every head is intended for a likeness. But the picture fails in two important points. One of these is animation. Every one who knows Parisian society is aware that at its most refined it is, compared with our own, full of sound and movement. Mr. Orchardson's groups, however, are serious beyond the wont even of Englishmen; and a grave fault is in the conception of Mme. Récamier herself, who is represented in the picture as altogether preoccupied with her own beauty. To listen "seductively" is above all things to listen with self-forgetfulness, with entire and restful sympathy and simplicity. English opinion would concur in this; and as to French opinion, which regards charm of manner more than beauty, it would refuse to recognise a merely self-conscious beauty as the goddess of a salon. Besides, the words quoted by Mr. Orchardson are decisive as to the kind of influence over her guests which his heroine possessed. He was ill-advised, therefore, when he painted her in a *pose* deliberately assumed, and wearing the unmistakable look of egotistic preoccupation. Mme. de Staël, too, is perhaps placed too much in a corner. France is not the country where wit suffers an eclipse so complete in the presence of beauty. These faults of judgment apart, the picture is full of singularly charming drawing and touch.

Mr. Orchardson is one of the two or three Academicians who do not use their Academical giant's power like giants. He sends few canvases to Burlington House at one time, so that the rejected have nothing whatever to reproach him with. Most frequently he is represented by one picture—as we have said, an important one, like the one cub of which the lioness boasted in the fable; at most he sends two or three, and the size is modest. The great amount of work which he has put of late into his best pictures has of course something to do with this. Nor have his contributions to the Grosvenor Gallery been very frequent. But he exhibited there in

1885 a very striking long picture, which had the place of honour, containing portraits of his wife and child. The group is painted most brilliantly and harmoniously, and is full of animation.

Mr. Orchardson has exhibited at the Salon as well as in the Champ de Mars and the Trocadéro. Among his Salon pictures may be mentioned a study of terriers, which is the only instance of the painter's practice of animal-painting. In landscapes he has confined himself almost exclusively to backgrounds and accessories.

Mr. Orchardson's work is to be commended for its possession of that quality of distinctiveness which has been rare enough in the British school; and his mission seems to be principally to teach repose—also rare. That often-mentioned "breadth" is chiefly a repose in his manner of seeing lights and shades where others might fidget with a hundred half-tones. Precisely so with composition. Who does not know the devices of that school which is afraid of an inch of calm canvas? The Bible and Church-service casually lying on the floor in one direction, a cabbage and a kitten in another, a helmet, turnips, and a baby accidentally strewn elsewhere? Wilkie was not free from the love of these. Mr. Orchardson and Mr. Pettie have both convinced the world that a torment of accessories does not make for the dignity or the right naturalness of art. Englishmen, who seem to have for ages exacted from their architects the greatest possible number of windows, have now perhaps begun to appreciate the beauty and value of some spaces of blank wall; and if they have learnt the same lesson in pictures, Mr. Orchardson has been among their principal teachers. Nor need the lesson stop here. Greater repose in modern rooms and modern dress would do much to relieve the world of its more vicious kinds of ugliness—insincere and inveterate ornamentation.

Although his work dates back, as we have seen, a considerable time, Mr. Orchardson ranks distinctively with the younger school of British art. He is now in mid-career, and full of that hopeful dissatisfaction so distinctive of the true artist, which he has himself put into an expressive word: "One is always finishing one's bad picture, and beginning one's good one."





yours very truly
William F. Yeames

WILLIAM FREDERICK YEAMES, R.A.

IT is claimed by the much-worried Royal Academy that those painters, sculptors, architects, and engravers who excel in their professions, and have become the representatives of all that is excellent in art in England, find their way, sooner or later, to Burlington House, and are eventually absorbed into the body as associates, if not as full members. It is further claimed that the painters who attain the coveted honours have, in nine cases out of ten, graduated in the schools of the Royal Academy, as the records of the studentships will verify. It is further declared that such exceptions to this latter rule as now and then do occur only go—upon the proverbial principle—to prove it; and the subject of this present brief biography is a notable illustration of these said exceptions. Yet, after all, perhaps, it must be said that it was due to mere accident that Mr. Yeames never studied at the Royal Academy. Had it not been for the circumstance of his family's residing chiefly on the Continent, he would probably have received his regular early tuition in art at the

hands of that institution. For although his first attempt to become a probationer, when a temporary sojourn in this country gave him the opportunity of making it, was unsuccessful, it may be reasonably inferred, looking at the position he now holds, that any second effort to qualify himself for the school of the antique would have led to his admission. As it was, the first means by which he has been enabled step by step to advance to distinction were found in Italy, and thus we see him coming before the English public in 1859 a full-fledged painter, as it were.

William Frederick Yeames, fourth son of the Consul of his Britannic Majesty King William IV. at Taganrog, on the Sea of Azoff, South Russia, was born at that place in December, 1835. Fortunately for him, he again presents an exception to the general run of youngsters who wish to become artists. He met with no opposition to his inclinations at home; on the contrary, his father being a man of great culture, and having a very refined taste in and knowledge of painting and engraving, encouraged his children to develop by study and observation whatsoever proclivities in the same direction they might inherit from him. He used to declare roundly that if any one of them displayed the inclination and ability requisite to promise success, no effort should be spared to make that one the artist of the family; and that one proved to be William Frederick. Probably in some sort with a view to arriving at a definite opinion on this point, and to discovering which of his offspring would exhibit the tendency he was on the look-out for, he took his whole family on a prolonged tour in Italy when William Frederick was between six and seven years old. Travelling on the Continent in 1842-3 was a very different business from what it has since become. A journey from Russia to Rome could have been no small undertaking in those days for a family of six children with their parents; and we may be sure that the attraction which the art-laden atmosphere of Italy had for the elder Yeames must have had something magnetic in it, and that his purpose of making his children personally acquainted with the masterpieces of art must have been very strong. The result showed the wisdom of the plan, for our artist says that, young as he was, he believes that the foundation of his love for the "jealous mistress," the love which has borne such good fruit, was laid during that period, inasmuch as he can remember how deeply impressed he was with many of the noble works to which his attention was drawn with especial emphasis by his accomplished father. The memory of many of these, and the enthusiasm and admiration which they kindled at the time, are, he declares, still fresh in his mind.

Unhappily, the advantage of such an able *cicerone* was not to be his for long, for Mr. Yeames, senior, died in Venice during the second year of the visit to the south; but the tradition of her husband's wishes was faithfully carried out by the widow, and when she and her family, after their bereavement, settled in Dresden, young William Frederick's art-education was not neglected. Indeed, as he, with his brothers and sisters, was entirely educated at home (the parents holding some peculiar views on this subject), the lad had a better chance, perhaps, of following

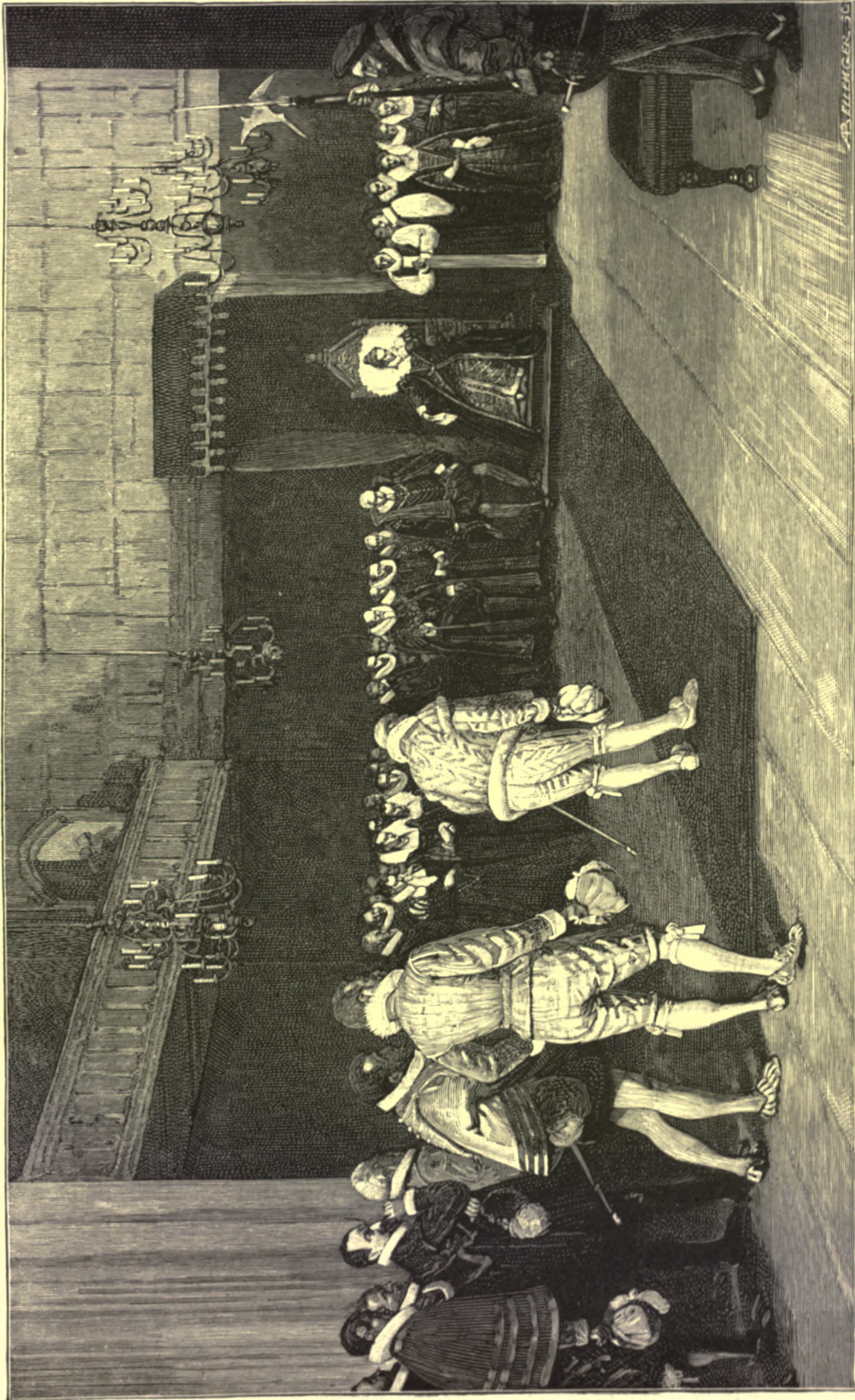
his bent towards art in conjunction with his other studies than if he had been launched into the rougher associations of public school life.

In 1848 the family removed to London. Here the drawing from casts was kept up in the studio of Mr. J. Sherwood Westmacott, whilst Mr. George Scharf trained the young student in anatomy and other rudimentary branches of the painter's craft. It was the experience thus gained which led, a year or so later, to the attempt above referred to, to gain admission as a student at the Royal Academy—an attempt which doubtless would have been renewed had not the family, in 1852, paid a second visit to Italy. For two years Mr. Yeames diligently pursued his art-education in Florence, under the supervision of Professor Pallastrine, of the Florentine Academy, and later on under that of Signor Raffaele Buonajuti.

Towards the close of this second sojourn among the relics and gems of art by which he had been so much impressed when a mere child, our artist went to Rome. Here, also, for some eighteen months he worked, we may be sure, with unflagging energy, otherwise the first pictures which he submitted to the Council of the Royal Academy would not have received the favourable consideration which they had. This was in 1859, when, having the previous year once more taken up his abode in England, the young painter exhibited at the Royal Academy, besides a portrait, a picture called "The Staunch Friends" (a jester with a monkey), which displayed even then, as far as the subject was concerned, many indications of those characteristics which have rendered his works popular. These may be roughly said to manifest a combination of the droll and the pathetic—that combination which, without being exactly sensational, goes home at once to the hearts of the many, whilst it appeals successfully to the more discriminating appreciation of the few.

Looking through the catalogue of his works, and recalling many of them vividly, one is struck in most instances by the delicate method by which he tells his story. Always contriving to do this forcibly through the medium of individuality, and the accurately right expression of his *dramatis personæ*, he gets, by mere truthful contrast, considerable value out of very trifling details. The by-ways of history are not unfrequently and wisely preferred by him to scenes which, being, perhaps, the turning-points of a country's fortunes, are dwelt on at length in its chronicles.

Mr. Yeames's brush is eminently representative of the domestically historic *genre* picture, though on occasions he makes some of his best points out of subjects which are purely historical. For instance, the work from his hand which first attracted the attention of the art-loving world, and by which he gained, in June, 1866, the Associateship of the Royal Academy, was of this class. "Queen Elizabeth Receiving the French Ambassadors after the News of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew," possessed merits sufficient to claim for it a very prominent position on the walls of the exhibition and a remembrance in the minds of all who are fond of taking retrospective glances at Royal Academy shows. The scene is truly dramatic, and gives us in looking at the picture a little of the surprise, though not of the dismay, of the French embassy, which, arriving in



QUEEN ELIZABETH RECEIVING THE FRENCH AMBASSADORS AFTER THE NEWS OF THE MASSACRE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW.

(By Permission of Octavius Coopers, Esq., M.P.)

gaia, finds the presence chamber hung with black and the Queen and her court silent, solemn, and dressed in mourning. There is some quiet expression in the backs of the disconcerted diplomatic corps—not overdone by any attempt at emphasising the comedy. This moderation is one of Mr. Yeames's good qualities. And amongst the successors of this picture will be remembered such conspicuous canvases as, in 1863, "The Meeting of Sir Thomas More with his Daughter after his Sentence to Death;" in 1864, "La Reine Malheureuse," Queen Henrietta Maria taking refuge from the fire of the Parliament ships in Burlington Bay; in 1865, "Arming the Young Knight;" in 1868, "The Chimney-



"HERE WE GO ROUND THE MULBERRY BUSH."

Corner" and "Lady Jane Grey in the Tower;" in 1869, "The Fugitive Jacobite" and "Alarming Footsteps."

Since the removal of the Royal Academy to Burlington House our artist has justly made a steady advance in public favour through his "Maundy Thursday" and "Love's Young Dream;" "Dr. Harvey and the Children of Charles I.;" "The Appeal to the Podestà;" "Pour les Pauvres" and "The Suitor." "Pour les Pauvres," exhibited in 1875, shows the door of a farmhouse, perhaps in the Low Countries, and two nuns drawing a little hand sledge up to it across deep snow. One nun is harnessed, the other holds open the mouth of a capacious bag, into which the good housewife empties her platters of loaves and cakes. For the nuns are collecting alms in kind for the poor who are hard pressed by the winter weather. Carrots and turnips and a can of milk have already been contributed, to the increase of the nuns' load and the lightening of their hearts.

Mr. Yeames rose still higher in the estimation of the *cognoscenti* as well as in that of the multitude by the class of work which is represented by "The

Last Bit of Scandal," "Here we go round the Mulberry Bush," and "When did you last see your Father?" The first named (by which, as also by "Pour les Pauvres," the painter was represented at Paris in 1878), is a pretty bit of eighteenth-century comedy. Two sedan chairs meet in a street, say of Bath. The lady and the gentleman who severally occupy them have something to say to each other of such interest that the tops must be lifted up and the news exchanged. Accordingly the bearers set down the chairs, and stand gravely holding up the flap covers, while the occupants stand up and talk. The group is thoroughly grotesque; nevertheless, it is gentle, probable, and unforced. The setting is in character—lilacs in bloom over a red brick wall, a "coach" with three footmen clinging behind rolling round the corner, a stalwart street seller with her basket, a little negro page hugging a lap dog. "Here we go round the Mulberry Bush" is, as regards motive, one of the painter's happiest works. The peaceful "bush" is represented by a now equally peaceful cannon, commanding a placid "haven under the hill," probably one of the deep harbours of Plymouth, in which the grand ships of another age ride at anchor. It is a last-century scene, and the veterans of wars then already ancient history sit in a terrace in the shade, talking together, to the accompaniment of the children's song. The figures of the little ones as they circle and dance are gracefully conceived. "When did you last see your Father?" represents an episode in the wars of the Parliament, when a party of Cromwellian soldiers who have burst into the apartments of a fugitive Royalist and have captured, we may suppose, the son and heir of the house, are putting to the little boy the fatal question which may lead to the accomplishment of their purpose, and the destruction of the parent through the truthfulness of the son. The child, placed on a footstool in front of the group of stern, cold, ruthless Puritan soldiers, gazes at his interlocutors with a blanched, half-timid face, in which nevertheless is visible the pride of his race, which we hope will carry the little fellow safe through his ordeal. Close by stand his lady mother and loving young sister, who look at him with mingled pride, tenderness, and fear. Nothing could have been more pathetic or better than the situation, whilst it afforded an opportunity for the display of the artist's characteristics and powers to their utmost, an opportunity in nowise neglected at any single point.

The election of William Frederick Yeames, on June 19th, 1878, to the full honours of the Royal Academy, is deservedly to be attributed to this, all things considered, the most conspicuously successful of the artist's latest efforts. And this distinction was amply justified by the important picture of "Amy Robsart." Powerfully sensational, its impressiveness and force were in nowise marred by the exhibition of anything that could be termed repellent. The incident, whether as related in Aubrey's "History of Berkshire" or in the pages of "Kenilworth," could hardly have been more admirably illustrated, and although it was the historian's description which inspired Mr. Yeames, according to the catalogue, the public accepted the picture readily as an interpretation of the great novelist's

account of the heart-rending tragedy. Very difficult would it have been more skillfully to realise the situation to which the following extract points:—

“In less than two minutes, Foster, who remained behind, heard the tread of a horse in the courtyard, and then a whistle similar to that which was the Earl’s usual signal; the instant after, the door of the Countess’s chamber opened, and in the same moment the trap-door gave way. There was a rushing sound—a heavy fall—a faint groan—and all was over.

“‘Look down into the vault. What seest thou?’

“‘I see only a heap of white clothes like a snowdrift.’”

Mr. Yeames contributed to the Royal Academy in 1879 a large portrait group of children on a shingly shore by a breakwater; and “La Bigolante,” a single figure study of a water-carrier. The Venetian girl has slung over her shoulder the grand copper vessels in which fresh water is carried in the sea city, and she turns from one of the picturesque marble wells which form the centre of every *piazzetta*. In 1880 the single figure was replaced by a well-filled composition, “The Finishing Touch.” Here we are introduced to the “wings” at some amateur theatricals, with a side view on to the stage. A last-century group is just ready to “go on,” and a nineteenth-century young man is giving the finishing touch in the form of a patch to the rouged cheek of a charming powdered lady in a large hat, whose attitude expresses her trepidation. A male actor, more solemnly nervous, cons his part beyond, and two or three press forward to see the play sidelong. The group on the stage is comically stagy—an actor having his hand raised in conventional declamation, while one actress faints as conventionally over his arm, and another kneels at his feet. The whole is involved in the yellow light of lamps, increasing the effect of the yellows and reds of the costumes. We need mention only the title of a less important picture exhibited the following year; but that should have a word of protest, inasmuch as it repeats an obstinate old error. “Dolce far niente” should be “Dolce non far niente,” as the “niente” in Italian requires a negative to make it complete, precisely as “rien” does in French. Nevertheless, Englishmen long ago resolved that they would have the phrase their own way. It is so commonly used, indeed, as to have become a kind of English—it is certainly not Italian.

The year 1882 was marked by Mr. Yeames at the Royal Academy by “Welcome as Flowers in Spring;” “The March Past”—children with sticks and brooms playing at soldiers in an old English courtyard; and “Prince Arthur and Hubert.” In the last-named picture the moment is evidently that in which the tender child, who has just learned what he has been ordained to suffer, clings to Hubert’s arm and tries to make the man look into his face:

Arth. Must you with hot irons burn out both mine eyes?

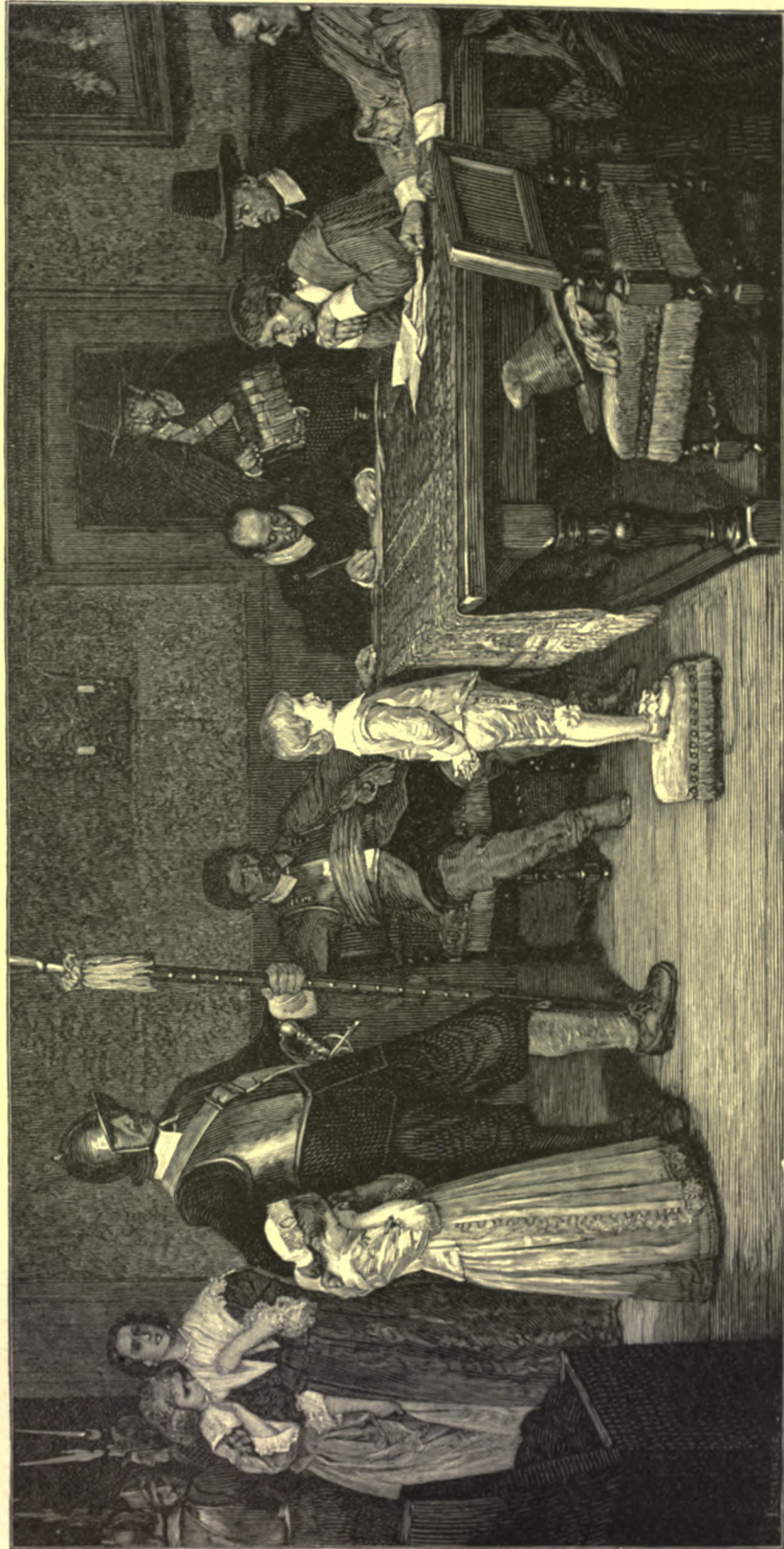
Hub. Young boy, I must.

Arth. And will you?

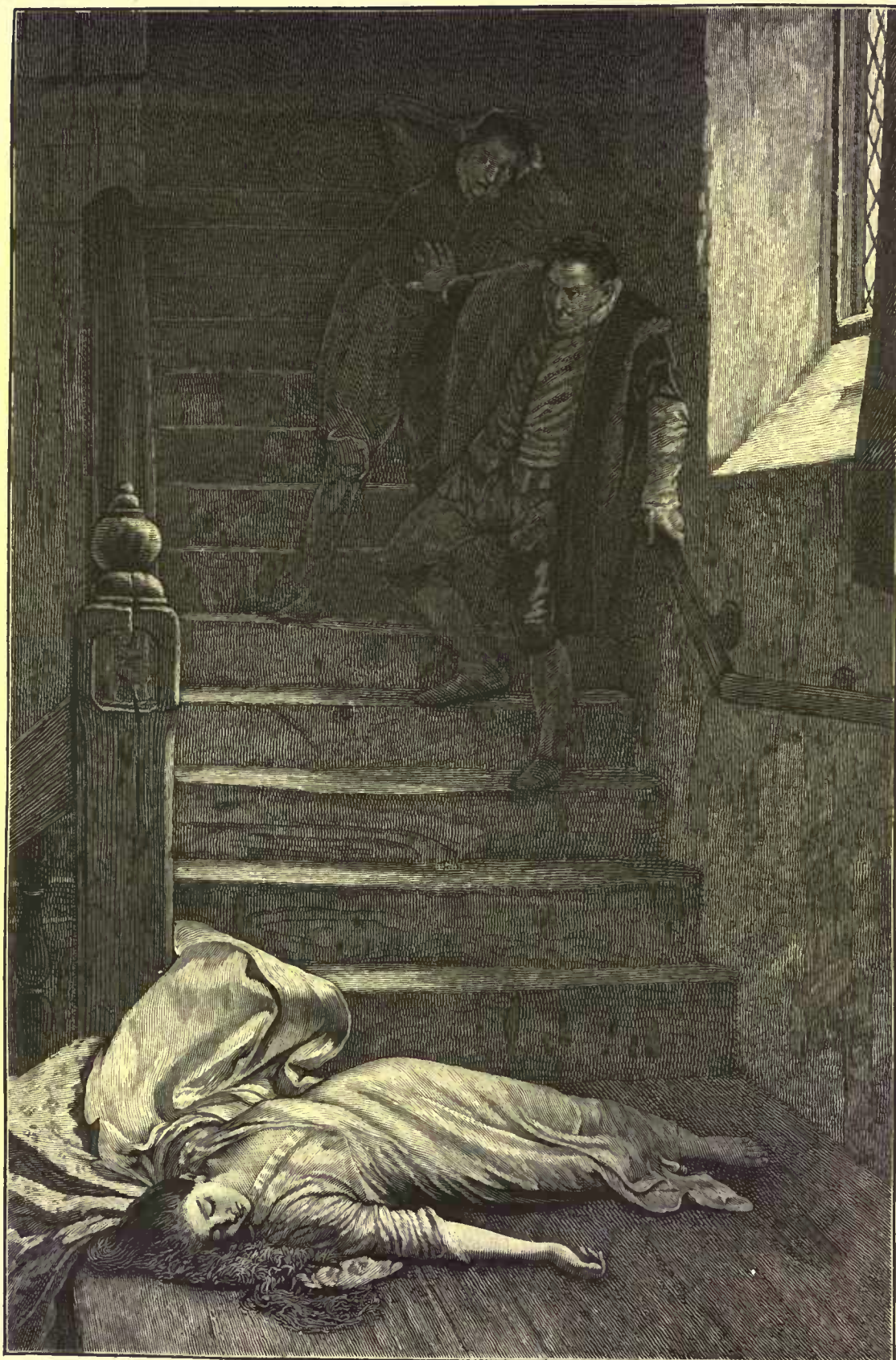
Hub. And I will.

Arth. Have you the heart?
 When your head did but
 ache,
 I knit my handkerchief
 about your brows
 (The best I had, a princess
 wrought it me),
 And I did never ask it
 you again;
 And with my hand at mid-
 night held your head;
 And like the watchful
 minutes to the hour,
 Still and anon cheer'd up
 the heavy time,
 Saying "What lack you?"
 and "Where lies your
 grief?"
 Or, "What good love may
 I perform for you?"
 Many a poor man's son
 would have lain still,
 And ne'er have spoke a
 loving word to you;
 But you at your sick ser-
 vice had a prince.
 Nay, you may think my
 love was crafty love,
 And call it cunning:—do,
 an if you will:
 If Heaven be pleas'd that
 you must use me ill,
 Why, then you must. Will
 you put out mine eyes?
 These eyes that never did,
 nor never shall
 So much as frown on you?

Mr. Yeames has pre-
 sented the stern in-
 terior of the prison.
 Hubert has sunk down
 moodily upon a settle,
 with his eyes bent
 to the ground, and
 Arthur, at his side,
 turns towards him,
 as he speaks, the irre-
 sistible appeal of his
 eyes. The composi-
 tion of the group is
 very graceful.



"AND WHEN DID YOU LAST SEE YOUR FATHER?"



AMY ROBSART.

(Purchased in 1877 from the Chantrey Fund by the Royal Academy.)

"Tender Thoughts" represented Mr. Yeames in 1883. In 1885 the Royal Academy had his "Ford's Hospital, Coventry," "Depart," and "Prisoners of War, 1805"—two "middies" who are enduring with English stolidity the curious looks of their French gaolers. In the following year our artist exhibited "Malvina" and "A Catastrophe." Perhaps, of all the painters of our school, Mr. Yeames has been the most constant to his own Academy. The reader is perhaps hardly aware that there is a rule to the effect that Royal Academicians shall not exhibit elsewhere than within the walls they are bound to honour. Of course no one thinks of obeying so tyrannical a regulation; nevertheless, there remains a certain etiquette as to exhibiting the most important work in the Academic galleries, which several painters have by no means shown themselves scrupulous in respecting. Mr. Yeames, however, has been, if we mistake not, almost absolutely faithful. We do not remember that the great attractions of the Grosvenor, to every painter who likes to see his work set forth by the advantages of space and quietness, have ever drawn him from the Royal Academy, of which he is so steady and industrious and able a member.

It has been aptly said, "Considering how much of Yeames's art education was received in Continental schools, one is surprised to see so little of foreign influence in his pictures. His subjects are essentially English, and his mode of treating them is generally analogous to that practised in our own school. He is an earnest, intelligent, vigorous, yet painstaking artist, whose works merit the favour they receive from our best collectors." And Mr. Tom Taylor, who was the friendliest of all critics on the press to artists whose work is distinctively English in its methods, has said of him: "Yeames is a conscientious and earnest artist; his gravity of conception and sobriety of style he owes mainly, no doubt, to his character and temperament, but it has been strengthened by his art education, the best part of which was carried on in Florence."



"LA BIGOLANTE."





L. Bonnat

LÉON BONNAT.



THE CRUCIFIXION.

A PAINTER of *genre*, history, religion, and portrait, stands in peril of not being remembered as distinctively as his successes might merit. This is the day of subdivisions. In science, material has accumulated at compound interest, but without the corresponding increase in man's mental capacity which we might have expected that evolution would produce to meet the exigencies of the time. Evolution may have created the giraffe's neck through successive seasons of drought for the more convenient cropping of the trees, but it has not lengthened human memory for the more convenient storage of the facts which the lengthening ages are piling up in history; it has not enlarged man's wisdom for the weighing of so much evidence; it has not perfected his discernment for the appraisalment of a multiplied literature; it has added nothing to the keenness of the individual eye and nothing to the power of the individual hand, in spite of the collective achievement of the many schools of art;





"Don't Cry."

and as for Science, she may be said to have left man, as a unit, nowhere—to have overpowered and outgrown him. We have heard it wittily said that whereas one man might, fifty years ago, have been a physiologist, a botanist, and a chemist, it now takes at least three men to be a chemist only. But M. Léon Bonnat has consented to no such subdivision of his art. He has elected to be everything. The question is whether the world will allow him the large praise of a master in each of his arts, or will enter into a subdivision of its own. For our part, we may be inclined to narrow this great artist's claims at once by rejecting his religious painting, and



RIBERA AT ROME.

even to go on and deny him the title of historical painter, so that, although we shall have paintings of religious subjects and of historical subjects to consider in this paper, we shall in truth be considering them as the work of a painter of *genre* and portrait. Our act of division is important. "Show me a man," said an old logician, "who is master of division, and I will follow him to the ends of the world." Assuredly we are not alone in judging M. Bonnat not to be, in the legitimate sense, a religious painter; but in the matter of history opinions may be much divided. In *genre*, on the other hand, he is so charming, and in portrait so masterly, that his place in those arts is fixed for ever.

Let M. Bonnat's blood and his education be borne in mind, and the reason of our distinctions will be more readily understood. He was born in the Pyrenees, of a Pyrenean family, so that his lineage was Basque, and not what we understand by French in its narrow sense, while his artistic training was altogether Spanish.

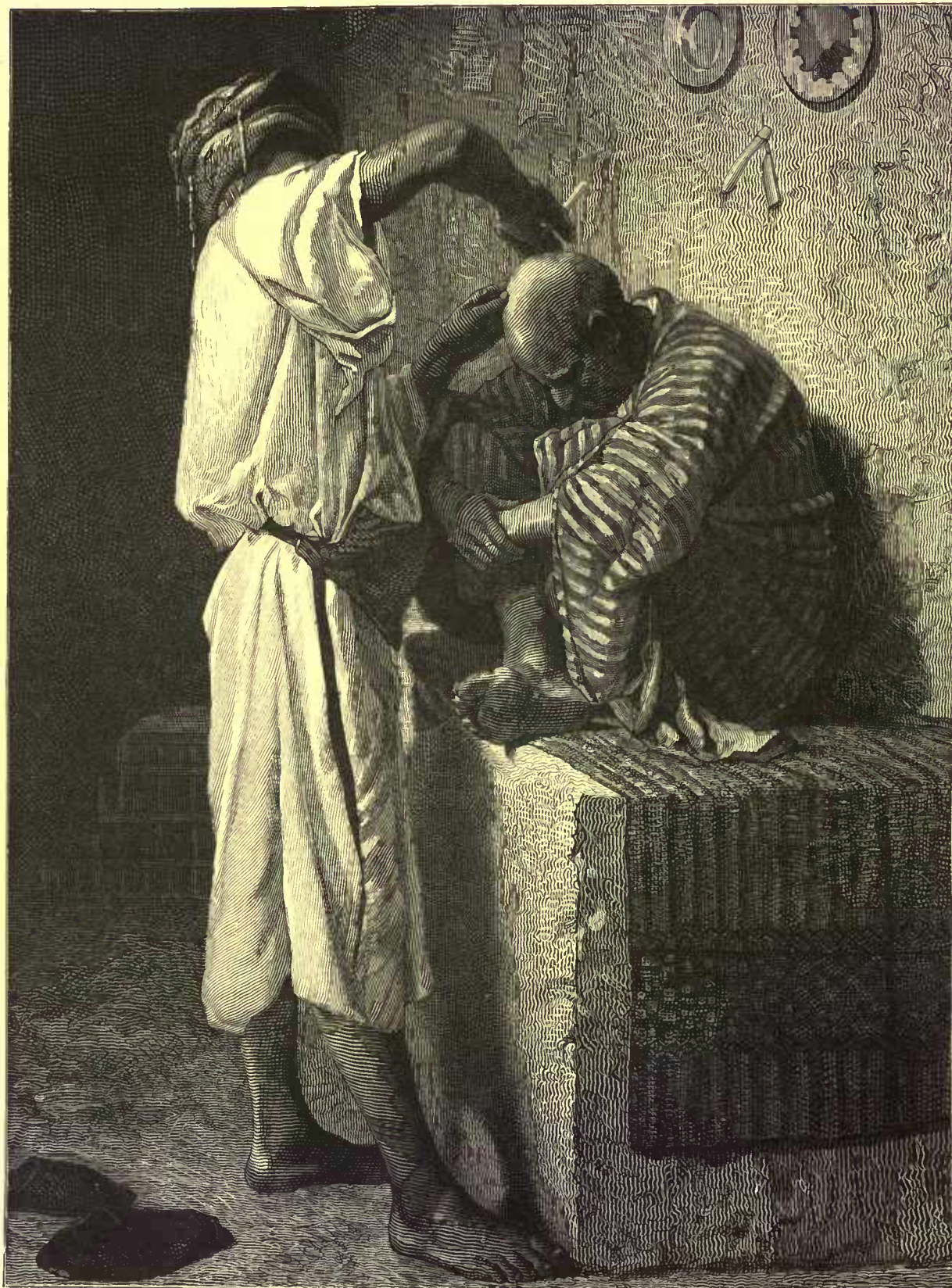
Velasquez, Murillo, Goya, Zurbaran, Ribera, gave him his inspirations of eye and heart, and especially Ribera. Now, among the great and noble, the austere or the sweet qualities of this group of great masters, one quality is eminent, and this is their humanity. Velasquez is human and noble; Zurbaran, human and austere; Ribera, human and cruel; Murillo, human and tender. This is the quality which made their portrait art so magnificent, but their religious art so unelevated that the great Spanish school, which painted so much religion, can scarcely be said to have been a religious school at all. Their sacred art was terrible and true, the art of inquisitors, perhaps, but not of renegades. It was realistic, in the sense in which Balzac and his followers are realistic in literature. Strong humanity is the very heart of realism; and Bonnat, the modern student of the Spaniards, with his Southern character, has their qualities, and "the defects of their qualities." When a chorus of criticism pronounced his great "Crucifixion" to be nothing but a magnificent picture of a man in torment—one of the thousands of slaves crucified by a Roman Emperor—M. Bonnat might have replied with some triumph that it *was* the picture of a man. We will go further, and say that it is the *portrait* of a man—so individual, so realised is it in the momentary life and agony of the swollen limbs, the strained tendons, the curled fingers. We would pronounce this to be essentially portrait art, not religious art. And in historical painting the same want of generality has almost the same effect—it changes a school of history into a school of portraiture; historical art of the grand style does not need to be too keenly, sharply, and insistently personal. It is the same in literature. Who, however impressed by the genius of Carlyle, will place him in the magisterial seat of the grave historian? Those who love humanity—the unit of humanity, whom no author has grasped so separately as Carlyle—may pronounce him to be something *more* than an historian, but no one will give him that large and dignified name.

It is, then, as a master of the art of portraiture that M. Bonnat has our most serious consideration, and in this the general voice is with us; for though his "Crucifixion" was much discussed, the portraits of Thiers and of Victor Hugo are undoubtedly those of his works which have had the supreme success. It was not, of course, with portraiture that the young artist began. A loss of fortune caused the removal of the family, while Léon was still a boy, from the Pyrenees to Madrid. He fell at once under the influences which reign in the great galleries of that city, and resolved to be a painter. It was in 1847 that he entered the studio of Federico Madrazo, who sought at first to discourage his pupil from entering upon the career. Madrazo knew, as every teacher of art must know, the delusions of ambition, and how cruel Art is; for if that Nature, which used to be called a gentle mother, is seen now to be stern, full of rapine and war, how much more cruel is Art, which will not forgive the absence of the indefinable touch of genius, and will not receive in its place the labours of a Hercules, the self-devotion of a martyr, unrelenting energy, confident hope, unbaffled patience. The young pupil, however, was not to be discouraged; and when, soon after his installation in the studio, he confided to his

master a picture painted in secret—"Giotto Tending his Flocks"—Madrazo embraced the boy with the charming untranslatable expression of his satisfaction, "Gamin, tu feras ton chemin."

The death of Léon Bonnat's father recalled him, at the age of twenty-one, to France. He went to Paris, and, following Madrazo's counsels, entered the studio of Cogniet, who was also the master of Meissonier. In 1857 Bonnat entered into competition for the Prix de Rome, but with no great success. The first and second grand prizes, each of which carries with it the much-coveted studentship at the Villa Médici on the Pincian hill, were borne off by rivals whose subsequent achievements have proved them his inferiors, and he himself gained only the lower prize, which does not entitle to the Roman course of study. The young artist's native town, however, to its great credit and glory, supplied by a true instinct the error of the judges, and subscribed to give him the advantage which he had missed. And his sojourn in Rome was fruitful. It may be said to have completed his time of pupillage, to have fulfilled the days of that tentative striving after the ways of others which seemed to be with him (as with others in art) the preparation for becoming truly and directly what his nature intended him to be. Simplicity—to be true to oneself, to be natural, to be emancipated and impulsive and characteristic—this is not the first step in art, but the last, and he who attains it is a master. The chief of the works sent home to the Salon by the young student were—"The Good Samaritan," in 1856; "Adam and Eve Recovering the Body of Abel," which gained a second medal in 1861; the "Crucifixion of St. Andrew," in 1863. On his return to Paris he painted a modern Roman subject, "Pasqua Maria;" and his "Statue of St. Peter at Rome" was bought by the Empress Eugénie. "Mezzo bajocco, Eccellenza!" a bit of Neapolitan street-life, and "Antigone Leading the Blind Œdipus," excited serious attention among the Parisian critics. This was renewed and redoubled on the appearance of the historical and *genre* pictures, "St. Vincent de Paul Taking the Place of a Convict," and "Neapolitan Peasants before the Farnese Palace." Both were painted with a strong and sombre palette—in fact, in too Spanish a tone to please Paris entirely; but the hand of a masterly draughtsman was recognised, and the young artist was praised for not allowing the pathetic incident from the life of the gentle St. Vincent to lead him into any emotionalism. A bold and accentuated portrait of a girl strengthened his position, and in 1867 the cross of the Legion of Honour was awarded him by the Emperor, while an "Assumption" two years later gained the signal distinction of the medal of honour. This picture is the treasure of Bayonne—the city which had been so kind a nursing mother to his genius in the matter of his Roman studies.

At the Salon of 1873 M. Bonnat's work was pronounced the principal success of the year. A capital bit of Oriental *genre* was the "Turkish Barber," and here the artist departed from his characteristic austerity of colour. The barber himself, with his yellow turban, stands in an attitude as grand and uses a gesture as large as though it were his business to remove the head and not merely the hair; his



THE TURKISH BARBER.

patient crouches on a yellow mat and submits his bluish scalp to the razor. The colour is emphatic, but not noisy. The other picture, the "Scherzo," proved entirely delightful to the Parisians, who respond instantly to subjects of maternal interest. In this charming group a *ciociarra* has laid her little girl across her knees and makes sallies at the ticklish sides of the pretty brown child, both faces



PORTRAIT OF LÉON COGNIET.

being broad with single-hearted laughter. The two wear the old hackneyed but regrettable costume, the rich tints of which the artist has admirably used.

To the following year belongs that most memorable "Christ on the Cross" to which we have already referred as the religious work of a portraitist, of a man impregnated with the Spanish humanism, of a master in what M. Zola would call "experimental" art—the art of experiences. The picture was painted for the Law Courts of Paris, before the days of the abolition of the crucifix from those places,

and the painful—even horrible—insistence of the treatment has been explained by the artist's wish to strike terror into the hearts of those who are condemned to death. Consolation might have seemed a more appropriate mission to such men at such a time, but M. Bonnat emphasised his intention by affixing the destination of the picture in large letters to the frame. The figure appears against a reddish sky, and is sharply and almost metallically accentuated by a supernatural light which brings out every articulation of the thin body; the head is turned upwards in what seems rather a spasm of pain than an appeal to Heaven, nevertheless the face is not without nobility; technically, the picture is a wonder of executive brush-work and a triumph of drawing. The same Salon contained a perfect antithesis to this sombre work—a portrait group of three little Parisian girls attired in yellow, blue, and rose-colour silks; and "The First Footsteps," a pretty composition of a young Roman mother guiding the feet of her nude child whom she holds before her. In the following year was painted that full-length portrait of Mme. Pasca which is sufficiently well known in the etching. The actress stands upright, clad in a broad and heavy Russian dress—white, with black borders and linings, the open sleeves showing the bare arms, a sash with silver buckles at the waist. The head is erect; one hand rests upon a chair, the other hangs straight, touched with the blue of a turquoise ring; the background is of a lurid red. The picture is somewhat too effective—too much massed, as the critic who pronounced it to be the portrait of the dress and the right arm of Mme. Pasca must have fully perceived. It is, nevertheless, magnificently modelled. Less successful is the autograph portrait exhibited in the same year; not that the artist has failed to render with vigour his own dark and sympathetic Basque face, but that the painting is somewhat mannered in dryness and severity. In 1876 M. Bonnat's "Struggle of Jacob and the Angel" gave only a limited satisfaction to those who were classic enough in taste to admire supremely Delacroix's great work on the same subject, but the artist's power showed as unmistakably as ever through the somewhat rough and confused composition. The small and brilliant "Negro Barber at Suez" bears the same date. Among his other works may be named "Ribera at Rome," which shows the Spanish painter sitting on the steps of a church, sketching the Capuchins as they come out in their cowls; "Italian Dancers;" "A Fella and her Child;" "A Woman of Ustaritz;" "A Street in Jerusalem;" and "The Elder Sister." But the *genre* pictures are too numerous for complete record.

The year 1877 was that of the artist's great triumph in his portrait of M. Thiers. The acclamation with which this work was received is a confirmation of our opinion that M. Bonnat is, by the essence of his power, a portrait-painter. No historical composition, no group of *genre*, elicited such a welcome. The portrait of M. de Montalivet followed in 1878, and in 1879 that of Victor Hugo; and before the death of Pius IX. the artist greatly desired to obtain sittings from him also. The Pope was, however, so difficult of access that when his consent was at last obtained, M. Bonnat was no longer free to attempt the work. The artist's pencil

is well suited in the heads of these memorable old men. Humanism is essential to portraiture, but for the accomplishment of noble or historical portraiture it must be accompanied by another quality Humanism and scorn make caricature;



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL TAKING THE PLACE OF A CONVICT.

humanism and familiarity make the portrait of the Jan Steen school; but humanism and sympathy make noble portraiture; and M. Bonnat painted these monumental portraits with fine and full sympathy. Of their technical merits it may be said that they are triumphant.

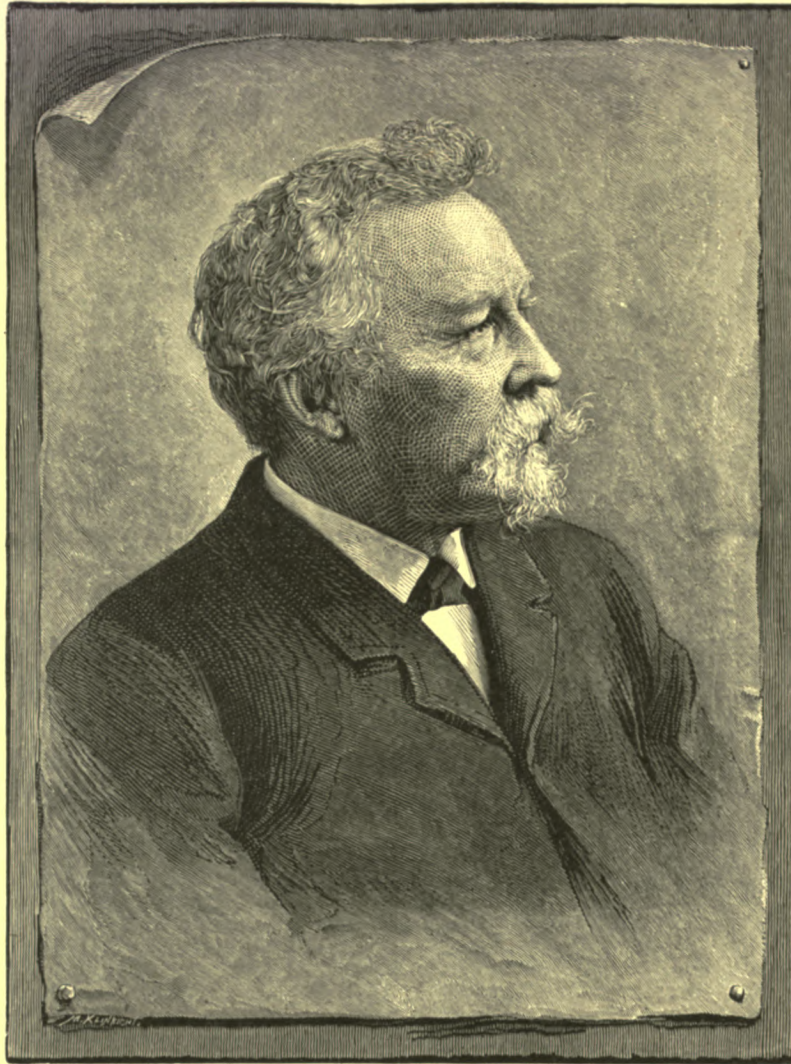
The most considerable of this master's more recent works are the portrait

of M. Grévy, which ranks with the three above mentioned to form a group unequalled in the present century, and that astonishing "Job," a picture somewhat irritating to the Parisian public, which dislikes eccentricity and does not love originality too well, or at least is shy of *originalité voulue*—premeditated originality—whereas London loves it. The poet, patriarch, and prophet appears as a deplorable nude Oriental mendicant. The study is a true one, and is executed with a startling and abrupt power; but while recording so well the potsherd and dunghill part of the story, M. Bonnat might have bethought him that there was something else to record. It is not from the abject mouth he has painted that broke the word of glory and joy—"I know that my Redeemer liveth. I shall see God!"

To our own opinion we cannot do better than add that of M. René Ménard, who wrote in 1875: "The popularity which Bonnat has now enjoyed for some years is chiefly owing to his small Italian pictures. But whatever may be the talent and thought spent upon cabinet pictures, an artist who has lived in Rome and studied the great masters can hardly remain satisfied with a kind of success so different from the dreams of his youth. M. Bonnat, in consequence, has simultaneously followed two directions, which seem opposed to each other, and the painter of the graceful little figures, so hotly disputed by amateurs, has never forgotten that he ought to be an historical painter." But, the writer soon shows, unconsciously, that Bonnat's power is not of the lofty historic style; for he proceeds: "Is Christ on the cross to be shown to us as the God who dies for the human race, or simply as a tortured man writhing in his last agony? To this last interpretation Bonnat adhered, and, his point of view once admitted, it must be admitted that he has fairly succeeded. The sufferer, in the midst of the most horrible pain, seems to strain in a last effort; the muscles contract, the veins swell, and the light, which brings all into the most pitiless relief, makes the strangest and most striking *trompe l'œil*. . . . Under the Roman Empire criminals were constantly crucified, and it is of them more than of Christ that we are reminded by M. Bonnat's picture."

The reader may gain a fair idea of style from the illustrations, and a short study will probably convince him that the one work in which this painter approaches grandeur of design most nearly is the "St. Vincent." It would be hard to find a composition of greater dignity in the whole of contemporary French art.





Eastman Johnson

EASTMAN JOHNSON.

EASTMAN JOHNSON, the painter of "Cranberry-Picking" and the "Con-fab," was born in the village of Friburg, in the State of Maine, about fifty-five years ago. While he was yet a boy his father removed to Washington. If at that time there was any large American town less qualified than most to inspire a youth with a turn for art, that town was Washington. It was, therefore, in spite of early influences, that Mr. Johnson, while a mere youth, yearned to find artistic expression for his thoughts.

Beginning with the pencil, and carefully copying objects which interested him, or studying engravings in picture-books, he acquired the rudiments of his profession. Accident made him acquainted with the uses of pastel or coloured chalk. Not only do the portraits that he made at this time indicate mastery over his materials, they also show the grasp of character which has distinguished his subsequent efforts. It is to be regretted that his devotion to oils has kept the public in ignorance of his early success with pastel. Crayon and charcoal continue, however, to be favourite media with him.

But the time came when Mr. Johnson concluded that it would be better to go at once to Europe. In the study of the masters of the past, or in the *ateliers* of the modern leaders of art, he could best obtain the necessary equipment for his chosen pursuit. He remained abroad over six years. Visiting Rome, Munich, Paris, London, and other art-centres, he finally settled at Düsseldorf, at that time far more important as a school of art than it now is, and very much esteemed and frequented by Americans, who made themselves willing disciples of the careful but rather pedantic draughtsmen of the little Rhenish city.

After two years at Düsseldorf he visited the Netherlands. When he arrived at the Hague, it was with the intention of remaining only a few weeks; but he was so enchanted by the works of the Dutch masters which enrich the capital of Holland that he tarried there four years. This interval was well spent in making admirable copies of Rembrandt and some of his contemporaries. In the better portraits of Mr. Johnson there is a depth, a richness of *chiaroscuro*, a mysterious suggestiveness, which perhaps are due in part to the careful study he gave to the works of that great painter: as interwoven with the originality of Tennyson they sometimes suggest to us Theocritus. While at the Hague he also produced a number of spirited pictures like "The Card-Players" "The Wandering Fiddler"—scenes taken from the picturesque *genre* effects of that quaint old country. Tarrying at Paris for a short time after leaving the Hague, he returned to America, after an absence of nearly seven years. At first he settled in Washington, and the results of matured study were soon evident in a remarkable composition entitled "The Old Kentucky Home." No more characteristic picture has ever proceeded from an American easel. In later work the artist may have surpassed it in technical excellence; but he has scarcely produced one which more happily combines artistic success and popular attractiveness.

The scene—a mansion on a Southern plantation—is one familiar to the times before the Civil War. We see before us a piazza and yard, the former shaded by lofty foliage, but somewhat rusty and dilapidated, as many such houses had become even during the palmy days of slavery. About the piazza, or in the vine-hung windows above, ladies and gentlemen are lounging, in the idle gossip of a languid summer's day. The yard and shrubbery, populated with negroes, babies, dogs, and fowls, present a picturesque scene. The marvellous fidelity of the details, as conveying a typical representation of plantation life, gave immediate popularity to the picture.

It was lithographed, and soon decorated cottage walls all over the country. From comparative obscurity Mr. Johnson immediately sprang to a prominent position in American art, a position he has ever since maintained. The picture which won him recognition from the National Academy, of which he was elected member in 1860, was one of his contributions to the Exposition Universelle of 1867. Encouraged by its reception, he removed his studio to New York, where he has ever since resided, and where he has turned his attention alternately to *genre*, portrait-painting, and wholly ideal compositions. A good example of the last is his "Consuelo," a portrait



CRANBERRY-PICKING.

of the heroine of George Sand's famous romance. Another example of what is sometimes rather absurdly called high art is his picture of "Milton Dictating to his Daughters." This very effective composition is remarkable for the accidental resemblance which Munkacsy's well-known picture bears to it in several particulars, especially in the pose of the blind bard.

Mr. Johnson's talents have found such adequate expression in portraiture that at present he occupies in this department a rank scarcely rivalled by any living American painter. Be his subject man, woman, or child, it is rendered with a blending of delicacy and strength not often found combined. In the painting of flesh he is especially happy. Some artists excel in the high colour and coarser texture of masculine features; others in the ethereal tints or tender complexion of feminine loveliness. Mr. Johnson is excellent in both. His work is remarkable alike for firmness or handling and refinement of colour and texture. It is, however, in his portraits of children that his ability in portrait-painting appears to be most original. Entering fully into sympathy with the innocent beauty of childhood, he

represents it with a freshness and poetic truth that would alone suffice to give him a prominent place in his profession. We may add that it is in his portraits that the technical excellences and defects of his style are best analysed and criticised. He paints with a full brush and great solidity, but at the same time with none of the coarseness that suggests rather paint than texture. His eye for colour is correct, and he is especially happy in brilliant effects, which he mellows by an agreeable modulation of grey tints. Light and shade, if not distinguishing characteristics of his work, are satisfactorily rendered. His shadows are sometimes conventional and not strictly true to Nature; and his drawing is liable to the imputation of uncertainty and fluffiness, due in part to his working so long without a master, but more to the fact that his talent is one for colour and the study of character. In composing and painting he holds a golden mean between those who insist on a Denner-like reproduction of every detail, and those who sacrifice every detail for the sake of the bare suggestion of a single central idea or emotion. In looking at his pictures we are not disturbed by such minute rendering as diverts the attention from the subject to the painstaking cleverness of the artist, nor, on the other hand, is the imagination too severely taxed to grasp the *motif* in view.

But the field in which Mr. Johnson has done his best work is *genre*. It is to this that he owes his popularity. In the representation of folk-life and child-life he has earned a right to permanent distinction. Hitherto most of the abler American painters have inclined to portraiture, while some have become known for meritorious and original landscape. American historical painting, however, has been, with a few exceptions, of a very inferior order; and until recently those who devoted themselves to *genre* have been few and generally of little importance. This fact has tended to give an increased brilliance to the paintings of William Mount, an artist of a genius resembling that of Teniers or Wilkie. We have already described one of Mr. Johnson's *genre* paintings, "The Old Kentucky Home." Another notable composition by him, quite opposite in character and beautifully treated, is the charming cabinet picture called the "Confab." A little boy and girl six or seven years old are having an innocent little chat in a hay-mow; that is, they are resting from their romp on a beam in a barn, and enjoying an infantile flirtation. It is an idyll of childhood. "The Stage Coach," another well-known Johnson, is probably the most elaborate drama of child-life that he has executed, and one of the largest.

"Cranberry-Picking," which we engrave, is a reminiscence of Nantucket. This island is settled mainly by three families, a circumstance that often occurs with slight variation in New England districts near the coast. The population of Essex, for example, is largely composed of Choates, Storys, and Burnhams. At Nantucket the leading clans or families are Macys, Folgers, and Coffins, these last the descendants of Admiral Tristram Coffin. For many years one of the three great whaling ports of the United States, Nantucket was rich in wealth and in traditions of the sea. The traditions remain, the wealth, however, has gone with those that accumulated it, and the once thriving port is now a waste of decaying wharves and

crumbling mansions. But Nantucket is gradually becoming a sanitary resort on account of the mildness of the climate, while its scenery, its traditions, and the quaint seafaring character of its people, offer unusual attractions to the artist. Mr. Johnson was one of the first to discover these advantages. He purchased a cottage near the town, in which to pass the summer and autumn months. The ocean is only a little way from his house, and his studio, once an old barn, is close at hand. Among the many subjects which he has painted at Nantucket none is more characteristic or more agreeable than his "Cranberry-Picking." The cranberry of the United States is nearly the size of a cherry; it grows in marshes and peat-lands; and is allied to the *Oxycoccus palustris* of Europe. It is greatly valued in America as a sauce, having a pleasant tartness; the time of gathering it is in autumn, and, like hop-picking in England, the business is made the occasion of much mirth and love-making. In his picture the artist has admirably represented this familiar scene. The colour is rich and harmonious, and the landscape is suffused by the mild glow of an autumnal afternoon.

His "Husking," like his "Cranberry-Picking," was suggested by the homely every-day life of the country-folk, and is qualified both by treatment and subject to win the applause of the connoisseur and the heart of the people. It was exhibited in Paris in 1878. In tone and colour and in the acute perception of rural human nature it loses nothing by comparison with the work of Jules Breton. "A Glass with the Squire" is another happy illustration of his facility in analysing character. A venerable country gentleman, probably the justice of the village, is offering a friendly half-patronising glass of wine to a farmer, perhaps one of his clients. The accessories, such as the old mahogany sideboard and the carved mantel, are suggested by what one may still find in the long-settled villages of New England or Virginia. "The Reprimand" is an excellent companion piece, representing a scene in the universal drama; it possesses certain features peculiar to a New England country house of the olden time. And among these a lover of European ideas will be inclined to place the emphatic indocility of the young woman who is undergoing reproof. Not less graphic and vigorous is the artist's representation of the characteristics of a New England Sabbath morning, after the serious Transatlantic breakfast has been despatched in the prosperous household, and before the family adjourns to meeting in the little belfried meeting-house at the head of the village street.

It is evident from this survey of Mr. Johnson's art-life that his position among American painters must necessarily be prominent and influential; for with his artistic qualities he has a fund of strong common-sense and an American shrewdness that render him an excellent manager and adviser. His name appears, therefore, on almost every art-committee of importance, and his judgment is greatly valued. Not only is he a member of the National Academy at New York, he belongs also to the Society of American Artists, which was established with the avowed purpose of rivaling the Academy. His work is to be seen conspicuously at the exhibitions of both these societies, and he is claimed by the followers of both the schools which are

represented in the two galleries. The Academicians call him theirs, because, although he studied long abroad, he has imported the style of no foreign artist, and because, too, he has been content to look for subjects at home, thus showing himself wholly in sympathy with the life and character of his own land. These qualities have not been characteristic of the work of the new school of American painters, who,



THE REPRIMAND.

while showing ability and enterprise, have purposely imported the styles of Bonnat, Gérôme, Daubigny, Corot, or Manet, together with a selection of subjects entirely foreign, and therefore imitative. Evidences are accumulating, however, which show that some of them are endeavouring to give expression to their own individuality, and to rescue their identity from the subservience in which it has been merged. They in turn lay claim to Eastman Johnson as one of their number, because his style (a quality which young America at least estimates at its true high value), while wholly his own, suggests the technique of the contemporary Continental masters. Thus justified and applauded, he may fairly be described as a representative American.

Moreover, he has earned that position and title by his choice, above alluded to, of home subjects. That choice required some courage, for except perhaps in some of the English colonies, it would be impossible to find popular life less pictorial than it is in America. As we have seen, Mr. Johnson has made the most of such moderate antiquity as may be found in the Eastern States, both North and South; but this antiquity is an exceptional thing, and in seeking for it a painter is departing from



SUNDAY MORNING.

the more purely characteristic tone of the country. It is not mere absence of rustic costume that makes contemporary American farm-life difficult to treat in art; for there is little or no costume in Italy, where every phase and act of agriculture is pictorial; and the peasants of Millet and Bastien-Lepage have, beside their *sabots*, no kind of interesting or distinctive dress. It is rather that the undemonstrative English race, so reticent in expression, so dull in gesture, has these characteristics very much increased and exaggerated in their Transatlantic quarters. Puritanism curiously checked such impulsiveness as was ever natural to the race; and though the effects of Puritanism have passed away almost entirely in the higher classes, the middle class and the populace are governed by its spirit, not so much in faith and ethics as in the habits of the person, turns of speech, reserves and silences in

family life, colourless expression in their faces, inexpressive words, and inexpressive action. All this makes a people unpicturesque in a far more serious sense than belongs to mere ugliness or dowdiness of popular working dress. But the painter of actual New England has to face these facts of life. Going North into Canada he would find the remains of French character, always more or less pictorial; going West he would find such cosmopolitan life as comprises every element of demonstrative and emphatic human nature. But keeping to the Atlantic coasts of the States he has the universal presence of middle-class Puritanism to deal with. Mr. Johnson has, in fact, done this as far as possible, and his countrymen have a certain gratitude to him for this as well as for the credit which he has brought to the art of America.





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